

# THE KING'S HANDY MAN

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By Rowland Thomas

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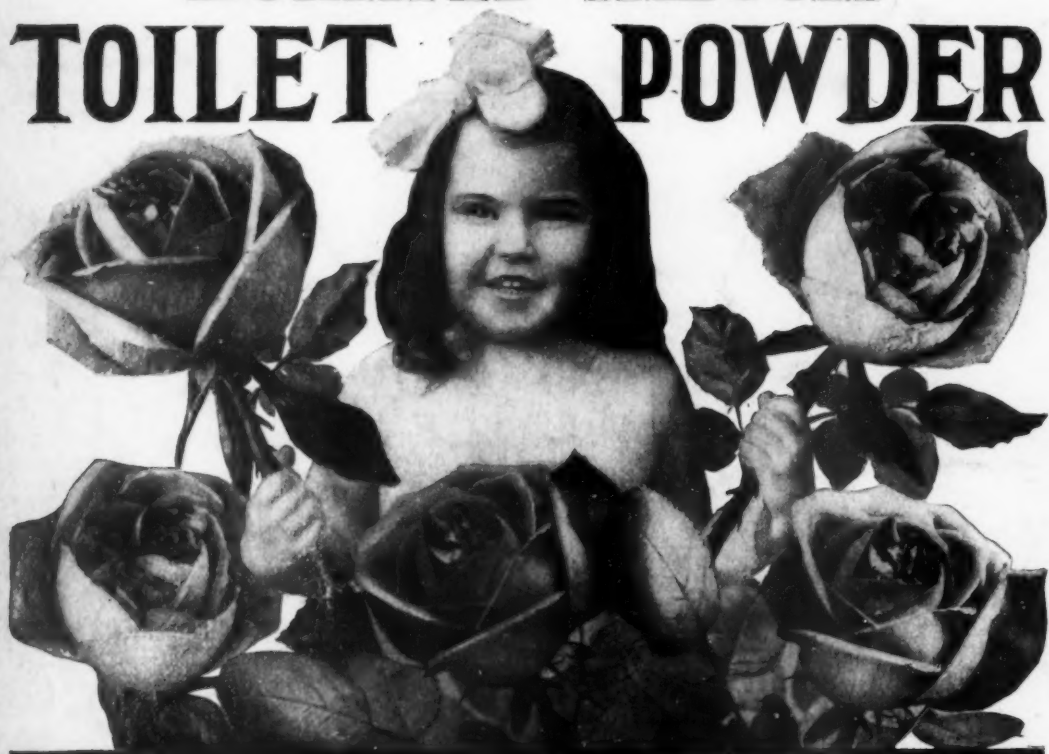


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DRAWN BY GUSTAVUS C. WIDNEY

"The king beheld his gloomy son and the princess."

"The King's Handy Man;" see page 176





said. "Now, just you hold on to everything," he added, as his majesty started irritably. "Don't you get sore, king. I know how you feel, but you wait about five minutes an' I'll have you with an appetite like a girl of sixteen. Just tell the royal bar-keep to bring in a pint glass, 'bout a quarter full o' pine-apple—nice juicy pine-apple shredded fine, will you, chamberlain? 'N' that cocktail-tray I overhauled last night—that was cocktails you was drinkin' last night, king, or you wouldn't feel so bad about it—an' a bottle o' three-star, an' one o' soda."

The chamberlain, reading no sign of assent or dissent in the face of the lowering monarch, yielded to the eloquent smile of the sailor and soon returned with the desired articles borne by a page.

"Now, king, what's the use o' feelin' like that about it?" said the handy man, with cheery clinks of his long-handled spoon against the tall glass. "M—m, that pine-apple smells good! You won't do it again till tonight, but that's no reason you need to sign a pledge. Just wait till you get this invigorator of little Billy's stored aboard of you," he went on, dashing squirts of vari-colored liquids from his long-necked bottles. "Now, that soda. Huh! Pleasantes, mos' home-like sound in the world, ain't it, the poppin' of a bottle? Mos' makes me cry, sometimes. Now it 'll be ready in a minute, king. You've no idea how that 'll sweeten your bilges."

"I'm usually called 'your majesty'," said the monarch, sulkily.

"Oh! that's all right," interposed Billy, affably, as he beat the mixture into a translucent, foam-topped vision of cool wetness. "I'm a 'Merican. Jus' plain Yankee Billy, I am, an' I'm too old to learn new names for the deck. You're a king, all right—any one can see that—an' you take everything but just the 'ace.' Now, I'm goin' to play the 'ace' on you," he added, proffering the sweating glass. "You just try that, king, an' see if you don't forget the missionaries."

The king sniffed at the glass doubtfully. At length he tasted, and his features relaxed. He took a great gulp and smacked his lips. "M—m, that's good!" he said, and drained the glass. He broke

into a beaming smile. "The king took the 'ace' that time," he laughed.

Billy's eyes danced. "Didn't I tell you?" he demanded. "See how quick it works! You couldn't 'a' said a thing like that five minutes ago to save your kingdom. Now what do you say, king? How'd a bit o' breakfast hit you: a nice juicy bit o' mackerel, now, with lime juice on it? Hey, king, an' a good, hot baked yam?"

The king smiled in anticipation. "If only I had a chamberlain like you," he said gratefully. It's really the easiest thing in the world to gain the esteem and confidence of a king, once you know where and how to begin.

The chamberlain scowled. "Breakfast is ready," he announced, in a sour tone.

So the king and Billy sat at breakfast together in a pleasant outer room, fresh with the breath of the trades and the scent of flowers.

"The chamberlain says you are a whaling gentleman," remarked the king pleasantly, with his mouth half-full of savory fish.

Billy chuckled. "I'm a whaler," he said, "an' I 'spose I'm as much of a gentleman as you'll gen'rally find runnin' free round the Central Pacific."

"A bit more of the lime, please," said the king. "Do you like whaling?" he inquired, squeezing the little green and golden fruit.

"So-so," said Billy, carelessly. "Not as well as mackerel, maybe," he grinned confidentially.

The king smiled at the hardy trencherman with appreciation not unmingled with anxiety. "I think they'd better broil two more," he said. "I find I really have an appetite. I usually eat an orange in the morning."

"I knew that would fix you," chuckled Billy, impaling a yam.

"How would you like to be my chamberlain?" inquired the king, with a glance of dislike at the official behind his chair. "It would be nicer for you than whaling, and you could make me one of those 'aces' every morning," he added, wistfully.

"Lord, king," said Billy, good-naturedly, "you've got a good chamberlain



DRAWN BY GUSTAVUS C. WIDNEY

"He looked as wretched a monarch as could be found in all the islands of the Sea of Forgetfulness."

now, only his head ain't just comfortable-like this mornin'. Besides, a sailor like me don't know enough eterket for that place. A chamberlain's got to know how to give her a jam full of eterket ev'ry now an' then, or she'll fall off on him, sure. No, king, it'd never do."

"I'd give you all you could eat and drink," said the king, persuasively. "You would live here, and there would be no work. I'll give you clothes and a wife, if you want one. These yams are good, aren't they?" He pared one with his thumbnail. "Several wives, if you care for them," he added generously.

Billy shook his head. "It's no place for a sailor," he said decisively.

King Kilauea knit his brows in thought.

"Will you stay and be my admiral?" he asked suddenly.

"Got a fleet?" asked Billy, in surprise.

"N-no," admitted the king. "But we'll build one. Besides, you play poker, don't you?"

"I've seen it played," admitted Billy, with becoming modesty.

"Well, then, that's settled," cried the king, in relief. "Chamberlain, this is Lord High Admiral Billy. Now, let them bring on those other mackerel. Haven't had such a splendid appetite since I was a boy," laughed the king. "Talking with you livens me up. It's dull here, generally; most people don't amuse me. And then that 'ace'—don't you think one would go well with this mackerel?" he queried.

"Sure," returned Billy, "I was just thinkin' of suggestin' one myself."

Thus began the companionship of Good—no, not that—of King Kilauea and Billy. And if you find it hard to believe, you must remember that it all happened some time ago, and in another part of the world. And above all, remember that you never saw Billy. I'm not going to tell you all, because it wouldn't be proper—and then I haven't the time just now. When I write a book about it, you can buy one.

But they got along very nicely. Every morning the admiral concocted "aces," and then after breakfast they sat down and played poker in company with the chamberlain, who had come to like Billy almost as well as the king did, after once his jealousy was soothed, and the crown prince, who was a splendid great fellow with a discontented frown. They played, as a rule, till it was time to go to bed, and the kingdom prospered. It was such an accommodating, trade-windy, gentle-showery, green-and-flowery sort of kingdom that it generally prospered, no matter

how the king passed his time. And that was very fortunate for the kingdom. Some kingdoms would have been uncomfortable.

So they sat and played poker till they reached the limit. Of course, the royal revenue was soon exhausted. It was the most elastic revenue with which monarch was ever cursed. There seemed to be no bounds to its contractibility. After the revenue was gone, the admiral, in his innocent, nautical way, proceeded to come into possession of the kingdom, with no sign of elation save now and then a twinkle

of amusement in the deep-set eyes. But by here a little and there a little—a grove of palm trees one day, a precipice the next—his domain extended. They spent two very pleasant days playing for a volcano, and Billy finally won it all except the smoke, which Kilauea very pettishly insisted on retaining as one of the ornaments of his crown.

But on the whole he bore his losses with the fortitude that was to be expected of a king. The crown prince showed much

more emotion than the king. Such was the latter's regal composure that he even yawned when the admiral raked in his last remaining town, and suggested that they try an "ace."

In the midst of his sipping he fell into a brown study, an unusual thing for him. "Down south, there," he said at length, "a thousand miles or so, is a very neat little kingdom ruled by a king named Tutuila. For a week I've been trying to fill a flush, and I'd like just one more chance. I'll play you for that."

"But it isn't yours," objected Billy.

The king regarded the simple mariner

with a smile. "As far as actual possession goes," he explained patiently, "it is not mine, for I have never bothered to take possession of it. But, constructively, my kingdom is the larger and I have more soldiers, so that, among kings, Tutuila would be regarded as a vassal of mine. If I lose, we will build a navy and go down and conquer him. An expedition would be amusing and wholesome, after this confined life." So they played for the king's constructive domains, and the king lost. Otherwise, we might never have had this story.



DRAWN BY GUSTAVUS C. WIDNEY

"'Good mornin', king,' he called in a mild roar."

Now, it came to pass, that shortly after these events the gloomy prince sought out Billy. One of the fine things about Billy was that no matter what you might think about his ideals, or his morals, or his luck at poker, the moment you had something you didn't want, or wanted something you couldn't think of, you instinctively put yourself in his hands. You didn't ask his advice, but simply told him and cuddled down in the assurance that he would arrange it all. Such is it to be a heaven-born handy man.

So the discontented prince went to Billy. "I don't know what it is," he said, "but I can't sleep half as long as I want to, and there's no fun in eating, and no pleasure in swimming, and I'm even sick of poker and 'aces.' In short," said the prince, frowning, "life is as dull and cold and heavy and gloomy as the big black boulder on my great-great-grandfather's grave."

"Is it any particular one?" asked Billy.

"Any particular what?" demanded the prince, with the very culmination of frowns.

"Girl," said Billy, concisely. "You're in love."

"I'm not," cried the prince, indignantly.

"You remind me," Billy went on, "of the way I felt one time down in San Diego. There was a Mejicana there—" But as all that happened in the old days and happened to Billy, we'll leave it out.

"She must have been a very pretty girl," remarked the prince, with bored courtesy when Billy had finished, "but I don't want any girl I ever saw."

"Then," said Billy, "I reckon we'll just have to keep you joggin' till you sight the one you do want. She's a-waitin' for you somewhere."

Poker being tabooed by its own limitations, the king showed a laudable willingness to pay his debts, or at least that part of them constituted by the realm of Tutuila, the poor little king. The astute monarch created a navy at one fell stroke by seizing a swift little schooner which was lying in the harbor, and then he and Billy sat down in the cool breakfast room and proceeded to fit out the expedition. From somewhere down in the town the admiral resurrected another white man, named

Todds, whom he appointed boatswain, gunner, quartermaster, master-at-arms, and several other things.

But Mr. Todds was not a man whose spirit was to be broken by manifold responsibility. He sat on the "house," in company with a bottle of gin and a packet of cheroots, and superintended the stowing of the munitions of war, occasionally coming up to the palace to make report—very occasionally, in fact, for Mr. Todds was a bashful man, as he himself had often noticed.

"I ain't like Billy," he would say. "I feels uneasy-like when I gets to cruisin' round too close to them kings, even the 'eathen kind. I'm always afraid o' spit-tin' on the floor, or somethink." Mr. Todds, in truth, was a Briton, and the odor of royalty lingered sweet in his nostrils.

So one Sunday morning Mr. Todds stood unsteadily erect and red-nosed in the breakfast-room. "I 'ave stowed, your 'ighness" (he accorded this title to the admiral, as a hint that he was fully alive to the new difference in their stations) "I 'ave stowed this mortal week a matter o' one 'undered bales o' caliker, twenty ton o' *taro*, the 'arf of powder, an' five 'undered ninep'un' shots, w'ich last," said Mr. Todds, wiping his forehead with the back of his hand, "is beastly roly and onreliable cargo, your 'ighness."

"A very good week's work, indeed," said the king, pleasantly. "And now, admiral, how much—how much—other stuff do you think we shall need?" he asked, with delicate circumlocution.

The admiral reckoned with a swiftness which roused the royal admiration. "Two hundred men, a bottle a day, two hundred bottles. Four months' cruise, hundred an' twenty days. Two hundred an' forty thou—no, twenty-four hun—give me a bit o' paper. Them ciphers gets fouled in my head. Twenty-four thousand bottles, that's right. Two thousand cases, king. Better make it twenty-five hundred, in case any of us gets sick or wounded or anything."

King Kilauea nodded assent to this wise provision against the possibilities of war.

"Mr. Todds," said the admiral, "in the mornin' you may begin stowin'

twenty-five hundred cases o' trade gin."

Mr. Todds beamed, as the full lusciousness of these figures burst upon his imagination. Then his face fell. "There won't be room, your 'ighness," he said, sadly.

"Well, then," said the admiral, "you'll have to take out that calico—"

"Oh, I say now, admiral," interposed his majesty.

"There ain't goin' to be no women along, king," said Billy, firmly. "This is an expedition, not a yachtin' party. Besides, I've sailed shipmates with women before, an' I know what it is. They gets to fightin' with each other, an' it ain't as if you could heave 'em overboard. You take them bales o' caliker out, Mr. Todds, an' half the *taro*. If there ain't room then you can take out all but five hundred pound o' that powder. It's just as well to get that out anyway, for it ain't safe cargo. It tends to blow up," said the admiral. "All you've got to do, Mr. Todds, is to make room. You can use your own judgment."

"Very good, your 'ighness," said Mr. Todds.

So through another week Mr. Todds sat on the house, along with his bottle and his cheroots, and exercised his judgment to his own immense comfort and satisfaction. "Twenty-five 'undred cases," said Mr. Todds, with unctuous emphasis. "That's w'at it is to be a king, swelp me. I may be a bashful man when it comes to boardin' them kings, but I'll make room for that. I knows how to stow cargo."

At length Mr. Todds finished his labor of love and they sailed, amid much burning of powder. In spite of all the thoughtless bestiality of that wild expedition, I fancy you would have enjoyed being there, especially if you are a man who loves the sea, a true-bred, wide-world tramp. For the fresh trade-wind hummed always in the rigging, and under its influence the sea grew bright and sparkling, and the trim little schooner heeled far over and dashed along, taking showers of silvery spray over her sharp bows. And above the sky was warm and calm, flecked with the fleecy bars of the trade-wind clouds, and by night the stars burned very large and soft.

The men lay on the deck and watched the world, for they had nothing else to do, except to drink their gin. All but the prince. He sat bolt upright on the forward corner of the house, day after day, and frowned at something very far away. His brows did not relax even when they entered the little bay where stood the capital of poor King Tutuila, the doomed. And a prince, or any one else, who scowls at that bay must be gloomy indeed. For the great mountains rise above it, and all around it runs a gleaming ribbon of coral sand, and the water is so still that in its cool blue depths one sees a fairy world. And the village nestles, a tangle of brown thatch and nodding palms and flowers, in a nook at its head, between the hills.

King Kilauea rejoiced when he saw it, for he had renewed his youth during the voyage. And when he saw a crowd gathering on the beach and hauling the long canoes down to the water, he rubbed his hands. "Oh, what a splendid killing," he cried. "How many people there are! Throw a shot into that largest crowd on the beach. Hurry! I haven't seen a good killing since the missionaries came."

Then ensued a mighty bustle on the good ship, and all waxed impatient for the powder and the ball, for the canoes were already in the water. All save the prince, who sat in his accustomed place and frowned. And at length Mr. Todds came aft, very erect, very red-nosed, and more bashful than ever before. "I 'ave to report, your 'ighness," he said to Billy, "I 'ave to report that the powder 'as been left be'ind."

"Left where?" demanded the admiral, explosively.

"Be'ind, your 'ighness. I mind now that w'en we was takin' out the powder, and 'ad only five 'undred pound or so left aboard, there was still fifty cases o' the gin on deck. So I told the men to take out enough more powder to make room for that. It seemed a pity to leave it be'ind, where nobody could tell what might not 'appen to it. So, I'm fearin' the powder was accidenta'ly left be'ind, your 'ighness," said Mr. Todds, rubbing his dry lips with the back of his hand.

"That," said the admiral, looking at





DRAWN BY GUSTAVUS C. WIDNEY

"I 'ave to report that the powder 'as been left be'ind."

the cloud of canoes, "that is a devil of a note, Mr. Todds."

"That," said his majesty severely, looking at the wretched man, "is indeed a

devil of a note. You deserve to be hanged, Mr. Todds."

"Yes, your 'ighness," said Mr. Todds, starting as he caught the gloomy eye of

the prince fixed blankly upon him. "Yes," said Mr. Todds, walking to the rail and spitting nervously but carefully over it, "Yes, I does."

"Now, admiral, what's to be done?" demanded the king. "I had relied on that powder. Why, there are ten times as many men in those canoes as on my ship!"

"Well, king," said Billy thoughtfully, "I'd wait and see. I don't see as there's anything else you can do. An' I've been lookin' at those canoes, an' there's women in some of them, an' never a sign of a weapon. So I'd let 'em come aboard, an' find out what they want."

So the people of the canoes clambered aboard, laden with fruit and flowers which they offered to their visitors. And the visitors received 't with many smiles, all but the prince. A very pretty little maid, with a bewitching smile, offered him a pine-apple, but he only said, "Thank you," very gloomily, and laid the fruit on the house, and frowned at it till the little maid timidly withdrew. Then the crew produced gin and *taro*, and they all sat down on the decks together, invaders and invaded, and made very merry till it was time to go home.

And next morning, poor, doomed Tutuila boarded them, and begged that his royal brother would deign to come ashore and in his humble home accept what insignificant entertainment he could offer.

"What do you advise?" asked the king, of Billy.

"Go," said Billy. "Otherwise, not havin' any canoes of our own, we'll never get ashore at all."

So they went, and King Tutuila sat them down in a circle on the soft white mats, the king and Billy, and the prince and the chamberlain, along with his own great men. And the old women led in the princess to make *kava* for the guests, for in that strange land a noble counts it a privilege to be a servant to his guests.

And when they led in the princess, good—I mean King—Kilauea opened his mouth, and Billy held his breath, and the chamberlain's heavy jaw dropped in astonishment, and even Mr. Todds forgot the bashfulness which hung heavy over him and gasped, "Swelp me, that's what

it is to be a princess!" Only the prince sat very straight and strong, and frowned outrageously.

So the princess and her maidens brewed the *kava*, and then the princess filled a bowl and offered it to Kilauea with a smile wherein girlish modesty contended with the pride of acknowledged beauty. And the king received the bowl with a gesture that was worthy—well, whatever he was, he looked the king then. And the princess filled the bowl again, and, still smiling, offered it to the prince, and the heavy wreaths on her bosom rose and fell a little, for he was a goodly prince to look upon, and that is a young and simple land. And the prince raised his eyes and looked into hers, and her smile faded, and the extended hand, such a slim soft hand, trembled a little. The prince took the bowl, and a smile flickered over his lips, a glimmer of flattered self-satisfaction. The princess took the bowl and withdrew with downcast lids. Then she relinquished it to a maid of lesser rank, to the great relief of poor British Mr. Todds.

"Tastes like soapsuds with salt an' pepper in 'em," said Mr. Todds critically. "But you never can tell what these 'eathen kings will drink."

After the *kava* they sat and held high and very sleepy counsel through the day. All but the prince, who mysteriously disappeared. And along late in the afternoon they all went away and left the king and Billy and the chamberlain alone together.

"I don't know what to do," said the king, plaintively. "They are good, kind people, and it seems too bad to hurt them. And Tutuila has fifty times as many men as I, and they are all big and strong. What do you advise, admiral?" he asked.

"I wouldn't be in any hurry," said Billy, getting up and strolling over to a window to ease his legs. "If the grub's good, there'll be plenty of time to think it over." His back stiffened as he glanced out of the window. Then he beckoned to the king.

"S-s-sh," he whispered.

The king stole over as softly as a man of his weight could steal. And there outside the window he beheld his gloomy son, and the princess. She was sitting on a heap of mats, and the cloud of her dusky

hair half hid her great black eyes, and soft cheek and melting chin. But they could see her lips, and they were pouted into a most uncompromising little knot. And the prince, the gloomy prince, lay at her feet, and his lips were parted in that most pitiful of all smiles, the smile of propitiation. And he was pleading, pleading remarkably well for a prince of his disposition.

"Oaninua," he was saying, "Light of the Sun as it Rests on the Sea of a Morning, listen to me. Shadow of the Tall Mountains at Sunset, I love thee." And the princess pouted still more. "Look at me, Daughter of the Nodding Palms of Nuuanu," pleaded the prince. "I love thee. Darling of the Hearts of the Gods, please look at me."

And at last the princess did look at him, very proud and severe till the pout began to play her false, and then she smiled and bent over toward him, and then—she jumped up

and ran away, like a wise princess.

The king and Billy ducked back out of sight. And they looked at each other and grinned sheepishly.

"Ain't that pretty?" said Billy at last, as if he were hoarse. "Ain't that pretty, king? I reckon we'll just have to go back without doin' anything," he added, not at all regretfully.

The king looked at him with a smile of pity for his nautical innocence. "Among kings," he explained patiently, "expeditions serve two purposes, equally honorable, to make conquests and to cement alliances. I shall proceed to cement an alliance with my brother Tutuila. And now, if the chamberlain remembered to bring the materials ashore, we'll have an 'ace' to get the taste of that *kava* out of our mouths. Did you notice the way the prince was smiling there at the last? Made me feel like a boy again myself," said the king.

## The Asphyxiation of the Gas Combine

BY WILLIAM HAMILTON OSBORNE

Young William Westervelt, esquire bachelor of laws, counselor at law, solicitor, and master in chancery, sat in his small office in the Baker building, waiting for the business that did not come. Had he been a budding barrister in London chambers, one would have said that he was waiting for his first brief; had he been a member of an American bar of fifty years before, one might have said that he was looking for his first retainer—a soul-stirring word, "retainer," one that, for the youngster, has passed almost into oblivion. As it was, Westervelt waited simply for his first case, for his first bit of law business—a deed, a will to draw—anything he didn't care much what it might be.

"If there were only something doing," he whispered to himself. He rose and stretched himself and paced the floor. He was tall and spare. He had a good chin and a nose that thrust itself well out into the air. Though but twenty-five in years,

the gray was creeping steadily and stealthily into his hair. Upon him, as he paced his small office like some lithe, caged animal, was the impatience of his unusually active, nervous, enthusiastic temperament. He had been admitted to the bar but one short week, and yet dull monotony was eating out his heart.

"I thought," he told himself, "that there was to be some excitement in this thing. Thunderation! I might better go to Cradlebaugh's. There's a whole lot doing there."

He seized his hat, placed it firmly on his head, and then sat down and wrote a brief inscription on a card:

AT COURT  
BACK IN HALF AN HOUR.

He examined this effusion critically. "It is a work of art," he was forced to acknowledge to himself. "'At court.' What



DRAWN BY F. DE FORREST SCHOOK

"William Westervelt drifted into Cradlebaugh's to play."

court? 'Back in half an hour.' From—when? It is beautiful—typical of the evasions and the fictions of the law."

With the aid of a pin he tucked it into one corner of his outer door, and then with no uncertain step swung down the corridor on his way to Cradlebaugh's.

Who was Cradlebaugh? William Westervelt well knew. The city of Monroe well knew, for Cradlebaugh and Cradlebaugh's were the talk of the big town; a town that whispered things against Cradlebaugh behind his back, but took off its hat when it met him face to face; a town that denounced Cradlebaugh in the market place, and then slunk through highways and byways into Cradlebaugh's brown stone palace in the center of the town and—played the game. Cradlebaugh was a big man with a big, smooth face and little eyes. He was rich—rich as Croesus. Ten years before he had opened the old Wiley mansion on the square—bought for a song, renovated regardless of expense—and had set himself up in business. He was a gamester who never gambled. He was a

man who pulled the strings with such certainty of grasp that the floating wealth of the city of Monroe surely but steadily entered his big, quiet fashionable place—and rarely left it.

And William Westervelt, a young man, without parents, with few friends, with little to lose and everything to gain, had drifted, time and again, into Cradlebaugh's to play. Cradlebaugh was no gambler—he was a man who merely played upon the foibles and weaknesses of men with money in their pockets. William Westervelt, on the other hand, was a gamester—a born gambler; and many times, with a shrewdness and a cunning beyond his years, with nothing to lose and everything to gain, he had lined his pockets with the wealth of Cradlebaugh. It was this temperament—a love of excitement, a love of the game of chance, that had led him to the law, the biggest game of chance that is. It was upon money won at Cradlebaugh's that he had pushed his way through the law school where he had earned his LL.B. *cum laude*, and his

LL.M. It was upon money won at Cradlebaugh's that he had furnished his tasty, modest office. It was upon money won at Cradlebaugh's that he lived while he waited for the business that did not come. At this very instant he had money in his pocket, but—that was not enough for him. He lacked the excitement that was breath to his nostrils; life-blood in his veins.

"I want to play—a real game." That was the thing he told himself. And he started on his way to Cradlebaugh's.

Midway down the steps he met a man who looked at him inquiringly. Westervelt nodded to him as a matter of course. The stranger stopped him, and, referring to a memorandum in his hand, inquired whether this might be the Baker building. It was.

"I'm looking for a man, a lawyer, of the name of Westervelt," ventured the stranger. Westervelt hesitated for an instant and looked the stranger over. He was a quiet little man, with just a suspicion of the shabby-genteel about him. Westervelt had started out to play a game, and he did not relish this uninviting interruption. He had it upon the tip of his tongue to direct the man, as any stranger might, to his own closed office, and then, to slink away to Cradlebaugh's. But the instinct of the young lawyer after business was upon him, and he nodded once again.

"I am Westervelt," he said. He turned, and with the little man retraced his steps, unlocked his door, and took down the sign that he had placed there. He ushered the caller to a seat, hung up his own hat, seated himself at his desk and began professionally to rustle the mass of papers there. His caller, about whom there was an air of quiet business, drew up his own chair.

"Mr. Westervelt," he said, "I've come to you because you're a young lawyer and I believe an honest one, and I believe that you're not afraid of anything." Westervelt smiled instinctively. He could guess what was to come. But he did not know then that during his youthful career at the bar, he was to hear phrases like this many, many, many times. Oh, the opportunities that occur for the rising young lawyer who is not at all afraid, and who is willing to fight anybody and everybody—without

a fee. Flattery drops feeless from the lips of the impecunious client. But Westervelt merely bowed.

"I take it, Mr. —" he began.

The little man handed out his card. "Thomas G. Bently," he announced, "that is my name."

"I take it, Mr. Bently," went on Westervelt, wise beyond his years, "that you have been to a good many lawyers in this town before you came to me."

Bently smiled in turn. "You can stake your bottom dollar that I have," he assented, with a burst of frankness, and a laugh that made Westervelt feel friendly toward him on the spot. "I've been to almost every lawyer in Monroe and East Monroe, and they've turned me down for just two reasons. I knew well they would."

"Those two?" queried Westervelt.

"The first," answered Thomas G. Bently, "was that I had no money. That's one—it's a big one, I'll admit. But it's not the biggest. The biggest reason is that they're afraid, every mother's son of them, to fight Foley—Big Foley. You know Foley."

Westervelt sniffed the air. "Is this a fight," he asked, "against big Jim Foley? No!"

He knew Foley, or at least knew who he was. Foley was a politician who knew enough to be a business man; a business man who knew enough to be a politician. He was the big man of Monroe. As a politician, he held the franchises of the big city in the hollow of his right hand. As a business man, he plucked those franchises by the roots and thrust them into his trousers pocket. His left hand always knew what his right hand was doing. Cradlebaugh was a siren in Monroe, luring men to his games gently, insidiously, without the suggestion of compulsion or of force. Big Jim Foley was a vampire. He was a car of Juggernaut. He forced the issue; he trampled over rights. But he did it in his own way. And in his own way he was quite as much of a gambler as was Cradlebaugh. But—were either of these two men, sages of the world, a match for William Westervelt—a young man, with an innate love of a game for the sake of a game?



"Big Foley," mused Westervelt. "And so," he continued, "you came in to retain me?"

"Without," persisted Thomas G. Bently, "a retainer."

Westervelt frowned. "How," he inquired, "did you expect me to be paid?"

Bently scratched his head. "I thought perhaps," he ventured, "that I could get you to take the case on a contingency."

Westervelt coughed and shook his head. "In all my practice," he announced, "in all my practice at the bar, it has been my custom never to take cases on contingent fees." He thought for a moment. "Big Foley," he mused again. "Of course," he went on, "there are exceptions to every rule. It is the exception that proves the rule. I might be induced, under certain circumstances, to take your case upon a contingency. If I should do so, Mr. Bently, I can assure you that it is the first time I ever took a case that way. If I should do so, it will be only after I have satisfied myself as to the facts." He drew forth two cigars, passed one over and lighted one himself. "Mr. Bently," he remarked, "now, get to work and tell me all about it."

"Two years ago," began Bently, "I owned the gas works at Donaldson—you know, over here, next to East Monroe."

"To be sure," responded Westervelt. "'Bently'—I knew that I'd heard your name. Bently, of Donaldson—of the Donaldson gas works." He looked suspiciously at his visitor. "And do you mean to tell me, Mr. Bently, that you're poor? I thought all gas works men were rich."

Bently sighed forlornly. "Two years ago," he said, "when I owned the gas works in Donaldson, I was very well to do. I owned my plant free and clear in the name of the corporation, which was wholly within my control. The dividends were large, and I was rich. Two years ago big Foley entered the arena of events. That part you know. You know that he obtained control of the Monroe Gas Company, that that concern absorbed the East Monroe concern, and that gradually the United Monroe County Gas Manufacturing Company became a living fact. Foley came to me just before that time and gave me my choice. He said I might

turn my plant over, surrender up my stock and franchises, take preferred stock in the United, and a salary of seventy-five hundred a year—or he would obtain a new gas franchise from the town of Donaldson, and freeze me out on my own ground.

"That was the alternative. But I never considered the alternative, because the proposition seemed so good. The people needed gas; the new concern was nothing save a combination of the old ones; I was to get preferred stock, and my knowledge of my own company's dividends gave me an inkling of what I could get by way of income. And then, here was a ten years' contract as Donaldson manager at seventy-five hundred a year. I did not hesitate, I took it. I know now that it was the only thing I could have done. But at that time it seemed to me that it was the only thing that I desired to do. The deal went through. And for six months I received my salary and spent it. and—"

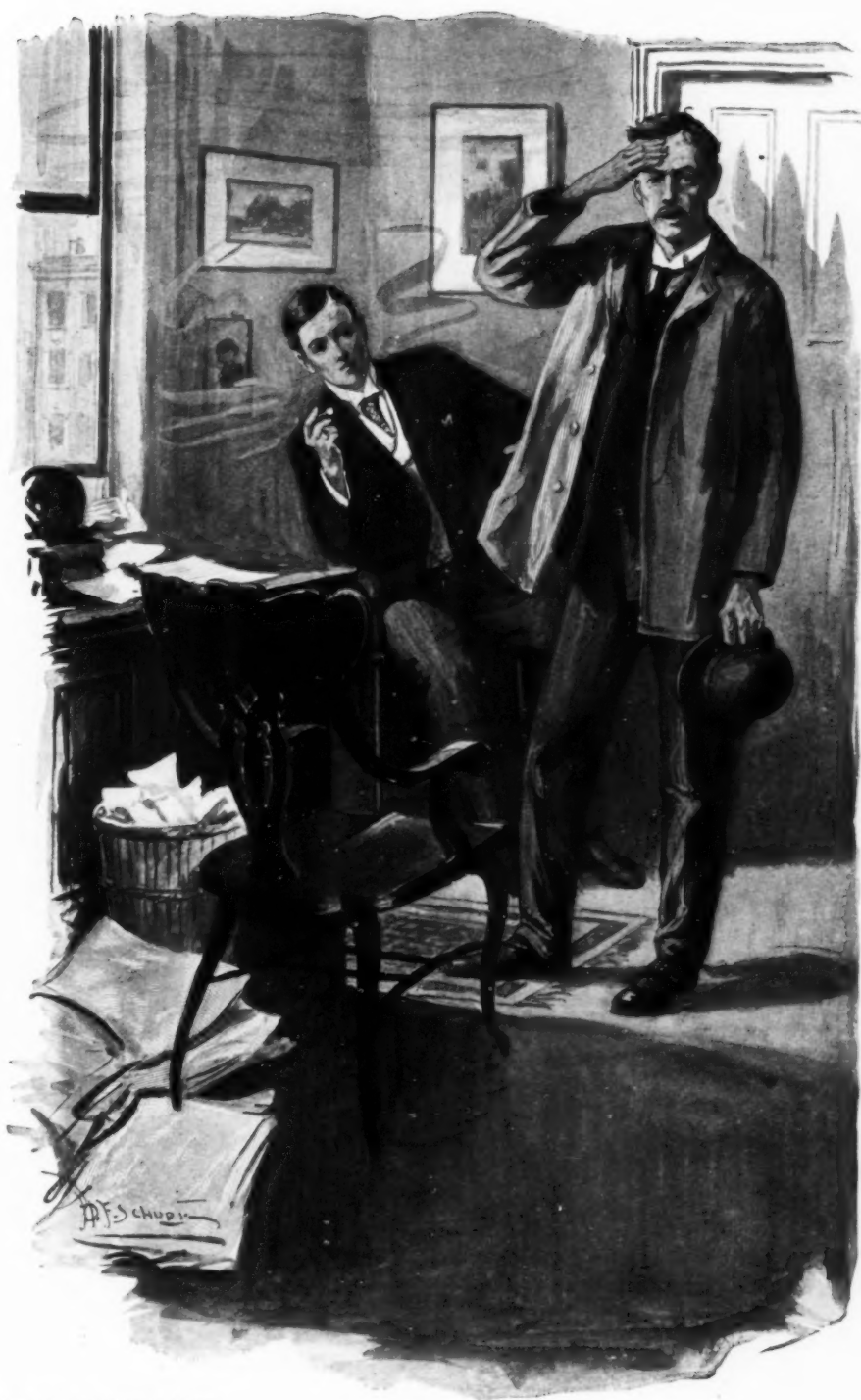
"Then?" queried Westervelt.

"Then—it stopped. After that I obtained nothing but promises. When dividend day arrived, no dividends were paid. And yet I had preferred stock in a wonderfully big concern, and I had a ten years' contract with that big concern for a big salary. See?"

"I see." Westervelt sniffed again.

Bently smiled a sickly smile. "Then," he said, "I found out what possibly you know. That the United Monroe County Gas Manufacturing Company had, without my knowledge, and before I took my stock, issued bonds for three-fourths the value of its plants; had purported or pretended to use the proceeds of the bond sales for new purchases and new improvements, and had failed to pay the first installment of interest upon the bonds, and the bonds, because of that default, immediately became due."

"The rest, Mr. Westervelt," he went on, "I'm sure that you do know. The trust mortgage was foreclosed, the property and plants were sold out, lock, stock, and barrel. Not for a song. No. But for half their value. People said that big Foley had bit off more than he could chew—he had failed, that was all. The plants were bought in by anybody, everybody: John Doe, Richard Roe, Tom,



DRAWN BY F. C. FORREST SCHUCH

"Two years ago I was rich. And now——"

Dick, and Harry. The proceeds of the sales, such as they were, were paid over to the holders of the bonds. That sale, Mr. Westervelt, took place one year after I had given up my plant, after I had taken preferred stock, after I had signed my ten years' contract. And now, what had I to show for it all. I had a contract with a corporation that had not one dollar's worth of assets; I had that corporation's stock, which was not worth the paper it was written on. The gas combine, the United, was defunct, a thing of the past, insolvent, wiped out. And that's all."

"All?" queried Westervelt.

"All," returned the other, "save that big Foley rose from the wreck, organized a new corporation, the Union Gas Concern, took over the properties by giving stock of the new concern, and started in where he had left off. But—he had never left off. And I'll show you why, Mr. Westervelt. There never was any United Monroe County Gas Manufacturing Company. There is not any Union Gas Concern. These are but names. There has been only—Foley. Foley had his fingers on the franchises. Foley was and is the combine. He was more. He was the holder of the bonds—through twenty or twenty-five of his henchmen. He failed to pay interest on bonds which he issued and which he held. He foreclosed on his own big plants. He wiped them out. He knew that no small man could buy in, at that big sale. He bought in, through unknown people. He reorganized." Bently rose. "Foley got millions of dollars worth of properties, and he gave for them nothing but pieces of paper—the obligations of a corporation, which, as a part of the scheme, was to go to the wall. And the result is the Union Gas Concern—the present combine. That—and Foley. And Foley is a blackmailer and a thief."

Westervelt smiled. "Foley," he answered gently, "is a politician and a business man of old Monroe. And now?"

"Now," answered Bently, "I want to get my money back."

"And—to get even?" suggested Westervelt.

Bently shook his head dejectedly. "I've

tried to get even," he answered. "I've spent all I had on it. I spent more trying to prove a case and get my money back. I'm in debt. I've got my wife and a big family." He brushed his hand across his face. "Two years ago," he said, "I was—rich. And—now—"

"Mr. Bently," said Westervelt, "you have assumed that I, being a lawyer and a citizen of Monroe, have known many things about the gas combine. You are mistaken. I know nothing of it, save that it sells the poorest gas I've ever seen." He rose, struck a match, and lit the jet at a side bracket in the wall. There resulted nothing save a feeble, yellow flame—nothing but an apologetic flicker.

"If I worked here nights," said Westervelt, "I'd need six such flames as that."

Bently nodded. "What are you going to do?" he asked. "I made good gas over in Donaldson. But the Union Gas Concern, the combine, is the only gas concern. If there were now two companies in Monroe there might be some competition, not only for private use but for the city's lights. But, thunder, when there's only one gas company, the contract must go to it, no matter how poor the gas or how high the rate. And there's where the money is—in the public contracts."

"Why, look here, Mr. Westervelt, I want to tell you. You're only paying a dollar a thousand for gas. That's all *you* pay, a private individual. That's old Foley. He knows. Keep down the price of the commodity to the individual. That's his game. Then the individual don't kick—about the price. But look at the city. Monroe has got to light its streets and offices by gas because Foley has kept the electric companies out, until he can control them, too. And what happens. You pay a dollar a thousand. The city pays ninety-five dollars per year for each street lamp, and approximately for each gas jet that it uses in its buildings. It pays by the lamp, by the jet. And what does it mean? It means that the city is paying today at the exact rate of one dollar and eighty cents per thousand. You know why. The contract goes to the lowest bidder. There can be but one bidder, and that's Foley—and the bid stands at Foley's price, and the city has to

pay it. It's a mine—a gold mine, for big Foley."

Westervelt had a faculty of harping on the things he knew—the things he was sure of. He turned out the gas jet at the bracket and sat down. "All I know is," he repeated, "that big Foley gives darn poor gas—too poor for any money, or for any town." He lit another cigar.

"Mr. Bently," he remarked, "you come back here tomorrow or next day. I want to think it over. I'll want to ask you a lot more questions—*but before that, I've got to work this thing out by myself. Good bye. If I fight at all, I'll fight big Foley on a contingent fee. You may rest assured of that.*"

Bently, a discouraged man, with just a touch of hope upon him, went.

"A contingent fee," thought Westervelt. "It's a game of chance. And all that I'm sure of is that big Foley won't make good gas, and that he ought to make it. I'll find out more about it, anyway."

He stretched forth his hand and took down his revised statutes. It was only the beginning point. He had no idea that these same statutes might help him in a fight with Foley.

"Gas—gas," he mused, leafing over the pages of the book. "I wonder if this says anything of—gas." He leafed it over and ran his finger down page after page. "Hold on," he said at last, "here's something—quality of gas prescribed

... that the quality of gas supplied by any company shall be such as to produce from an English parliamentary standard Argand burner, known as the London burner for sixteen candle gas, a light equal in intensity to the light produced by not less than fourteen sperm candles of six to the pound each burning one hundred and twenty grains to the hour; such gas shall be so far free from sulphuretted hydrogen that it shall not discolor paper imbued with acetate of lead exposed to a current of gas issuing for thirty seconds under pressure of five-tenths of water. . . .

He rose and lit his burner once more. "That's all clear in my mind," he remarked, "as that gas is. I don't know, old chap," he remarked to the feeble flame of gas issuing therefrom, "it may be that you come up to the definition of yourself,

but you certainly don't look like it. I'll bet there's nothing parliamentary about you."

Westervelt may not have been on the right track so far as Bently was concerned, but of a certainty his thoughts were of a kind with the complaints made by the people of Monroe. Poor gas had become a public scandal. But, it was nothing more. Of talk there was much; of action, none.

"Somebody," mused Westervelt, "ought to make Foley furnish good gas. Can he be made to furnish good gas? Who," he asked of his statutes, "can compel Foley to furnish good gas? Who can compel him to furnish gas of any kind?"

He didn't know, then, that the germ of the solution of the Bently case lay in his last question—he didn't know it for ten minutes. But suddenly he dropped his book upon his desk and leaped to his feet.

"Eureka!" he exclaimed, "Eureka! Eureka! I have found it."

Cradlebaugh's did not see him that night. For he was sitting in a bigger game, with bigger men. The game consisted in sitting in his office, by moonlight, supperless, smoking good cigars, with feet cocked upon the window sill—thinking, thinking, thinking.

Next day he sent for Bently. "I'll take your case, Mr. Bently," he announced, "on a contingency. I'm going to start in right away. You're an expert and you can get another, or, maybe, two more." He opened his revision. "I'm going to proceed against Foley," he continued, "under the statute, to compel him to furnish gas that is gas. It's simple. We can make a case. And—"

"And," protested Bently, "he'll furnish it, of course. He'd have done it a year ago if anybody made a stand against him. I can't see what good that will do for me."

Westervelt looked Bently in the eye. "Mr. Bently," he said, a shade of annoyance present in his voice, "do you want me to take this case?"

The two men stood looking at each other for fully half a moment. Bently was the first to withdraw his glance.

"I—do," he answered.

Westervelt smote his desk with his clenched hand. "Then, by George," he

exclaimed, "I'm going to manage it, not you. It's my case now, not yours, and I'm going to handle it in my own way. And you'll do just as I say." It seemed a bit uncalled for, this sudden outburst, but it was premeditated. Westervelt knew that in the game he was to play he must be the master; knew that it would save trouble, possibly defeat, to make this plain at the very start. It did.

Westervelt started in to enforce the statutory penalty against the Union Gas Concern—the revocation of its franchise for *mal user*. The gambler's luck was with him. Two out of the many owners' protective associations in Monroe already had begun seriously to agitate the matter; and Westervelt, in his formal application as a mere citizen, found himself only the mouthpiece of an already active movement.

"Gas! gas!" the whole populace was crying. "Give us gas that is gas. Light, more light!"

Foley, a wise man, who knew that the camel's back will bear everything but the

last straw, stepped down from his perch of power and temporized. "We'll give you better gas," he said.

Bentley shook his head. "I told you so," he said to Westervelt. "Foley'll do it. The crowd think he won't, but he will. He sees, does Foley."

Westervelt bowed assent. But the people only laughed. "It's Foley's promise," they cried derisively. "Only a game of talk."

"Three months," Foley told the people; "it'll take me three months to complete my improvements. Give me that time, and I'll do the rest."

The business men of the town thrust forward a small electric lighting concern. "If you fail," they threatened Foley, "we'll revoke your franchise, and we'll pass an ordinance for electric lighting of the streets and back it up."

At this threat Foley laughed in his sleeve. "They'll never get an ordinance for electricity until I say the word," he told himself. "The lighting contract goes to the only bidder, which is the lowest

bidder, which is the highest bidder, which is the Union Gas Concern—which is Foley. But—I'll give 'em better gas. I've got to do it. It's right, and what's right is all right, when you've got to do it, after all."

Foley had been afraid of electricity. The city lighting contract was the idol of his heart, the apple of his eye. In that public contract was Foley's big profit. His last public contract was just running out, and it was his fear of electric lighting contracts that had made him bow, at this juncture, so readily to the popular will. He knew that his con-



DRAWN BY F. DE FORREST SCHOOK

"Westervelt was sitting in a bigger game, with bigger men."



cern would get the forthcoming contract—but, he did not want electricity to be even talked about in Monroe in connection with municipal lighting. Until he could safely control the electricity of the town, the public commodity must be gas. And, with the people quiet, he was quite sure that he held the council in the hollow of his hand.

"When they see my new gas," Foley informed himself, "they'll forget that there ever was such a thing as an electric light."

"At any rate," Westervelt told Bently, "the people will be satisfied."

Bently nodded uncertainly. He was unconvinced. "When, Mr. Westervelt," he asked, disconsolately, "are you going to take up my case, I wonder?"

Westervelt snorted. "Take it up!" he exclaimed, "I'm more than half-way through with it now. Take it up!"

On the streets the public were still growling. "Promises, an' nothin' else, from Foley."

The common council advertised for bids in the regular way for municipal lighting for the next three years. It was only a matter of form. "What do you advertise for?" Foley had said to them, time and time again. "It's a waste of public money, don't you see?"

But the advertisement this time served an unexpected purpose. The superintendent of streets and highways strolled one day into the office of the mayor.

"What do you think, Mac," he inquired, "there's two bids for the lighting of the streets."

The mayor nodded sullenly. "That dinky little electric lighting company, I suppose," he answered, "I thought as much."

"Electric nothin'," answered the superintendent, "nothing of the sort. It's gas."

The mayor sat bolt upright. "Gas!" he cried, "what gas? Whose gas? What do you mean?"

The superintendent passed over the bids. They spoke for themselves. One was the proposal of the Union Gas Concern, big Foley's corporation. The other—"What's the other?" asked the mayor of himself. And then he read it off.

"The Monroe Improved Gaslight Com-

pany," he exclaimed. "Who in thunder can they be?" It was an enigma. They sent for Foley and told him. Foley scratched his head.

"It's a joke," he said. "How could there be two gas bids? Why, I've got all the gas plants that there is within twenty-five miles and more, of here. The Improved Gas Company, eh! What the dickens does it mean? I'll go and look them up."

He found the certificate of incorporation in the county records. It was a recent one. Its incorporators were unknown by name to Foley, and the only clue was the name of Peter G. Schenck, master in Chancery, who had taken the acknowledgements of the three. Foley sent for Schenck and catechised him. But Schenck knew nothing, save that three men, identified by business cards and their own representations, had come to him and asked him to take their acknowledgements and affidavits.

"What in thunder does it mean?" thought Foley.

A week later the bids were formally opened—the two bids. Foley's was as usual. So many street lamps, so many jets, so many this, so many that, and all at the customary and time-honored profitable rate of ninety-five dollars per lamp, per jet, per annum.

"Monroe Improved Gas Company's bid," droned the clerk of the council, reading the other bid. "Statutory standard—English parliamentary standard Argand burner—fourteen sperm candles—six to the pound—What is this, anyhow?"

"Cut it out!" exclaimed an energetic member of the council, "What in thunder is the price? That's what."

The clerk dropped to the bottom of the second page. He braced himself.

"Eighty dollars a lamp!" he replied hurriedly and in an awe-struck whisper.

A shudder went around among the aldermen. "Eighty dollars, against Foley's ninety-five." It paralyzed them. For the difficulty was, that, all other things being equal, the council was bound to accept the lowest bid. It did not dare to refuse. This was a public matter, and the wolves of reform were already howling in the distance. However, in their dilem-

ma, they sent for the head of the city law department. He looked helplessly upon the bids.

"I'd rather not advise you in this matter," he choked, feeling, possibly, the fingers of Foley already at his throat.

"You've got to advise us," insisted the board. The attorney looked about the room. The reporters of a hostile press were there. He drew a long breath.

"The next contract," he announced, in a trembling voice, "must go to the low contractor, the Improved Gas Company of Monroe. That's all."

Within one hour of the awarding of the contract, the protective associations had the news, and the common people were throwing up their hats.

"Now," they said, "we'll have gas for once—for all." But even they did not know who this new concern might be. They didn't care. "Any gas," they said, "is better than old Foley's."

Two hours later William Westervelt and Thomas G. Bently sat closeted in Westervelt's small office, Westervelt with an evening paper in his hand. Bently glanced at it doubtfully.

"Now," he said to Westervelt, "that we've done this crazy thing, and have the contract, what are we going to do? We haven't got a plant. We haven't got a dollar to get one. We haven't anything—except the contract."

Westervelt smiled one of his inscrutable smiles. "We have—everything," he answered. "Come with me."

He took from his drawer a bulky document which he had spent days in preparing. He thrust it into his pocket and led Bently downstairs. They made a beeline for the offices of Foley and the Union Gas Concern—the combine.

"Mr. Foley in?" queried Westervelt. Foley was, and Foley would see them. Foley inquired their business.

"We want some—gas," announced Westervelt. Foley nodded scowlingly to Bently. Then he brightened up.

"Some gas," he answered. "This is the place to come. Who are you; where are you building your house, and how many burners do you expect to have? And you don't want to see me. See our

superintendent downstairs about this thing."

"I don't want to see the superintendent," answered Westervelt. "I want to see you. My name is Westervelt. I am not building a house. This is Mr. Bently. It is he who wants the gas. He is not building a house. He simply wants wholesale gas at retail rates."

Foley sniffed. "Wholesale gas at retail rates," he answered. "O. K. Where's the factory?"

"There is none," answered Westervelt, "but he's got about five thousand burners more or less, and he will use, undoubtedly, some several hundred thousand feet per annum."

Foley gasped. "What!" he exclaimed. "Who are you, anyway, that you want so much gas as that?"

Bently smiled, for he now began to understand. "Mr. Foley," he answered, "I am the Improved Gas Company of the city of Monroe. That concern has the lighting contract for the next three years."

Foley snorted. "And with what kind of a plant," he asked, "will you light the city of Monroe?"

"With no plant," answered Westervelt gently, and in soothing tones, "with no plant. We will light it with the improved gas, Mr. Foley, of your Union Gas Concern."

Foley went wild. Not because he grasped the situation, but because of the assumption of his two visitors. They stood there respectfully, waiting for him to get over it. It took some time. Finally Westervelt again addressed him.

"You refuse, Mr. Foley," he inquired, "to supply us wholesale gas at retail rates?"

Foley broke into withering profanity. "Of course, I do," he answered.

Westervelt bowed. "Now," he said to Foley, "it's only right to tell you that we did not come here to get gas. We came here to get you to say just what you've said—to get you to say on behalf of your Union Gas Concern, that you would not furnish us with gas at retail rates. It was not gas, but your denial of it, that we wanted."

It will be remembered that when William Westervelt first delved into the law



DRAWN BY F. DE FORREST SCHOOK

"We came here to get just what we've got. We're going to smash you, hip and thigh."

he had asked himself who could make Foley furnish better gas. He had gone further. He had asked himself who could make Foley furnish—gas. He had answered it. He was holding out his hand for gas at retail rates, between which and the public lighting contract of the new concern there was an enormous profit of fifty cents per thousand. He was a consumer, demanding a right. He drew forth his bulky document, and with a fountain pen, inserted but a paragraph in a space left blank for it. Foley watched him, puzzled.

"It was 'No' that we were after, Mr. Foley," went on Westervelt, "because by this refusal, you have committed an act upon which I can obtain a revocation of your franchise. You have disobeyed the simplest statutory provision—your gas company is the servant of the public, and you didn't know it. And when the Improved Gas Company offers you the statutory rates, you refuse at your peril."

"Suppose I ain't got the gas?" retorted Foley.

Westervelt grinned. "You've been supplying all Monroe for several years," he

answered, "and you've increased your plant. But—enough of this. We came here to get just what we got. We're going, Bently and I—you know Bently of Donaldson, that you smashed some time ago—we're going, with what we've got, to smite you, hip and thigh."

They left. Foley, still raging, still puzzled, went to Cowen, Covington & Black, and told them in detail just what had passed.

"Westervelt—Westervelt," mused Covington, feeling for his revised statutes, and opening them at the gas company act. He read but for an instant.

"Why, you blamed idiot!" he screamed, to Foley, "you had no right to do it. You're no kind of a gas man. Do you think you're running a department store? Can a trolley company refuse to take on passengers because there are five thousand of them?"

"Sure," answered Foley, grasping at straws, "if they ain't got the cars. And if—" he repeated, as he had already said to Westervelt, "and if I ain't got the gas—"

Covington withered him with a look. "Why in thunder," he exclaimed, "if you didn't have the gas, did you put in a proposal for the lighting of Monroe? Of course you've got the gas, and they can prove it."

Foley wilted. "You want to think twice, Foley," said Covington. "The attorney-general of this state is a Republican. Westervelt's a Republican. And you're only big Jim Foley of the Democratic ranks. You're bucking up against the state this trip."

Half an hour later, Foley stood in the

office of William Westervelt. He had capitulated. For he had done the thing he had to do. The Union Gas Concern—the combine—had signed a contract with the Improved Gas Company of Monroe, for a three years' supply of Foley's improved gas, at retail rates.

"I'm so glad," murmured Westervelt, "that it's improved."

Foley, snorting with rage, flung himself out of the office. Westervelt and Bently looked at each other and broke out into simultaneous laughter.

Inside of a month the common people of Monroe were walking in comfort and safety about well-lighted streets.

"By George," they said, "this here gas of the Improved Gas Company is about five hundred per cent better than that there gas of Foley's. Lucky thing we made a deal with them."

Three months later Bently borrowed enough money on his contract to pay to Westervelt the contingent fee which he had earned. Westervelt took it, thrust it into his pocket, and strolled out into the town. He sauntered lazily into the brown stone palace of the man named Cradlebaugh.

"It's three months or more since I've been in a real good game," he told himself. "I must surely sit in one tonight."

Ten hours later he left the house of Cradlebaugh and lit a good cigar and sauntered off.

"All in a day's work," he murmured gently. "Sometimes we win against big Foley. Sometimes we lose—to Cradlebaugh."

He had dropped his first contingent fee in the mansion of the man named Cradlebaugh.

## In the Interests of Elvira Jane

BY EDNA KINGSLEY WALLACE

Elvira Jane, aged seventeen, sighed rapturously, with epicurean enjoyment. The Lady Gladys Maude, after harrowing vicissitudes, had on the last page been masterfully imprisoned by the strong and willing arms of Sir Claude Poindexter.

An added paragraph thrown in for good measure exhibited the twain five years later drinking tea on the lawn with their three children, a noble boy and two beautiful little girls. All was thus as it should be. But at the end of several lesseningly

blissful minutes Elvira Jane sighed again, and not rapturously. Every-day life, within the observation of Elvira Jane, was dull. Nothing romantic ever happened to her, unless the admiring grin of the vegetable man, who had bow-legs and a broken nose, could be so construed. Others, in remote spots, were undoubtedly suffering, being rescued, falling in love, slaying the villain, and otherwise illustrating the elements of fascinating adventure; while she, Elvira Jane, languished in the uneventful kitchen of Miss Abigail Porter, where nothing unexpected ever befell except perhaps baby food when you had ordered melons. Now, if Miss Abby would only—but no, it could hardly be expected, for where did Miss Abby ever see a man? Certainly not at auxiliary meetings nor afternoon teas.

Elvira Jane sighed again, this time with the sleepy resignation of tired youth. But there was no luxurious slumber for Elvira Jane until certain mysterious evolutions had been performed. For, with bated breath, he it said, Elvira Jane was surreptitiously devoted to the practice of beauty-culture, as daily prescribed on the fourth page of the Evening Telegram, and strove faithfully to abide by the rules in her case made and provided. Gently but firmly she smoothed down her aspiring nose. Then, for the purpose of enlarging her round little eyes, she stretched them open to their widest capacity, achieving thereby an appalling ferocity of aspect, which was not lessened by the strenuous and involuntary widening of her anxious mouth. She rubbed a reckless quantity of cold cream into her round little cheeks, after which she brushed her wiry dun-colored hair with the vigor of ambition, and rolled it up in tea-leads with a view to an effect of unstudied beauty on the morrow. Then Elvira Jane wound her alarm clock and betook herself to hard-earned impenetrable slumber—slumber of such unimaginable depth as to be impervious to anything less than the wreck of matter and the crush of worlds.

In the front chamber, however, matters were not so propitious. Miss Abigail Porter, aged thirty-seven, sole and lonely survivor of Porters divers and various, tossed and turned and twitched with nerv-

ousness. It was a windy night in May, a final outburst of the nearly exhausted ill-temper of late spring. Windows rattled and indistinguishable things slammed. Far-away dogs barked and howled, and less distant cats yowed and spat. The periodical street-car, a block away, rounded its curve with an insistent shriek that put the final edge upon Miss Abby's already sharpened nerves. Hard upon occasional flattering intervals of quiet there came from time to time the peculiarly irritating concussion which indicated violent misbehavior on the part of Miss Abby's own back gate, obviously left unfastened by the careless Elvira Jane. To this responded as in a quarrelsome dialogue the too-loquacious gate of Mr. Thomas Joralemon, bachelor, who had recently come to dwell next door. The duo was maddening.

Miss Abby stood it as long as she could. Then, arising from her bed, she donned a pink flannel kimono and her slippers, and crept down the stairs and through the house to the back door. Stealthily she unlocked the door and slipped out to fasten the refractory gate. At precisely the same moment there emerged from the rear of the residence of Mr. Thomas Joralemon an apparition clad in pajamas and a bath-robe. Involuntarily these two nocturnally arrayed figures paused and regarded each other; then, not having the pleasure of each other's acquaintance, they solemnly proceeded to the accomplishment of the similar errands which had brought them forth.

Now, kimonos in their native clime are scant enough, to be sure, but the negligee variety to be achieved by means of Put-terem's patterns is as voluminous as the tradition of starched Americanism requires. Therefore, furiously conscious of the opportunity she presented to the vagrant winds of heaven, Miss Abby was obliged to clutch her mischievous garment wildly with one hand while endeavoring to fasten the gate with the other. But the fastening needed two hands for its subjugation, and Miss Abby raged helplessly, warmly conscious of the bright electric light beating frankly upon her dishevelment.

"Allow me. May I be of assistance?"



The deep voice of her neighbor startled Miss Abby. She turned quickly.

"Oh, thank you. I can't seem to do it. I think everything is bewitched tonight."

"Yes," nodded Mr. Joralemon, "after hearing the cats I thought when I first caught sight of you that you must be the witch."

Miss Abby gleamed, and involuntarily put her free hand to her hair, which blew in distracting little curls about her forehead. "I'm sure I look it," she murmured, in sudden embarrassment.

"Well, I don't know," answered her companion, scrutinizing her with that bald lack of tact characteristic of single-minded folk. "There are witches and witches," he added non-committally.

By this time they were moving up the path leading to Miss Abby's house. But just as Mr. Joralemon was about to say "good night," the wind, swooping impishly through the open windows of Miss Abby's room, darted down the stairs and through the house to the open back door, which thereupon slammed to with an emphasis that made Miss Abby's teeth chatter when it was borne in upon her that a spring lock is impregnable from the outside. She was locked out.

"Good heavens!" she exclaimed involuntarily, "what shall I do? That door has a spring lock."

Mr. Joralemon whistled. "Is nothing else open?" he inquired, with an air of eliciting evidence.

"Nothing except second story windows," groaned Miss Abby. "What on earth shall I do?"

"Wake the maid," answered Mr. Joralemon, with an effect of simplicity that fairly staggered Miss Abby when she remembered the slumbering abilities of Elvira Jane.

"My maid never wakes up," she wailed. "Gatling guns wouldn't rouse her at this hour."

"Well, we'll try." Whereupon Mr. Joralemon thumped and banged and pounded upon the door. A sepulchral stillness was the sole reward of his efforts.

"Elvira Ja-ane!" called Miss Abby, with illogical softness, lest she wake the neighbors. No response.

"Where are those open windows?" in-

quired Mr. Joralemon. "Are they by any chance over that side porch?"

Miss Abby hesitated. "Ye-es, but I don't believe any one could climb up."

Now Mr. Joralemon was forty and not slender. Nevertheless, he said grimly, "I'll try."

And try he did. Miss Abby stood below in the shadow whilst the gallant Joralemon strove to swarm up a post to a point where he might grasp the grill-work just below the porch roof. The performance, perfectly visible from the street, was brilliantly illuminated by the electric light upon the corner. Wherefore the following events came about:

"Hi, there, come out of that!" yelled the voice of the law in the person of a burly policeman who dashed up, revolver in hand. "It's a pretty slick game," he added, "but it don't go on my beat. Come down, or I'll fire."

"You confounded idiot," yelled Mr. Joralemon, "look out, or I'll fall on you. I'm coming down, and coming fast." And down he slid, precipitately, to the floor of the porch; and saving himself from the threatened fall, swung about and seated himself on the railing confronting the minion of the law. The policeman dashed up the steps. Mr. Joralemon, gallant man, was smiling.

"Oh, Mr. Officer," gasped Miss Abby, from the shadows, "it is all right. I am locked out of my house, and this gentleman, who lives next door, is trying to effect an entrance for me." Miss Abby's voice grew steadier.

"Well, I niver," remarked Officer Grogan, meditatively. "I beg your pardon, ma'am. Can I help yez?"

"When I take to housebreaking as a profession," interposed Mr. Joralemon, "I shall wear more clothes, and a different kind."

A shadow approached from the front of the house. "What's the row?" inquired the voice belonging to the young man who cast the shadow.

"Lockout," answered Mr. Joralemon briefly.

Miss Abby shrank further into the darkness.

"I'll try my keys on the front door," volunteered the officer. And he did, but

without success, for when at last he found a key that turned the lock the several bolts and bars devised by unprotected femininity held fast. It was no use.

"Miss Porter," said Mr. Joralemon at last, "there is nothing for you to do but to spend the rest of the night at my house. I think I can see that you are made comfortable."

"But—" protested Miss Abby, "I—why, in the morning, don't you see—"

"I see just one thing at a time, Miss Porter, and my present perception is that you are going to catch a bad cold pretty soon if you don't get under cover."

"I'll just sit down here on the step and wait till morning," suggested Miss Abby, weakly.

"Rubbish!" snorted Mr. Joralemon, with masculine vigor. "You'll do nothing of the sort. It is only about a quarter after twelve. You'd catch your death. It isn't warm tonight, by any means. You are coming into my house to go to bed like a sensible woman. Come, there's no use waiting here."

Meekly Miss Abby succumbed to the inevitable and followed Mr. Joralemon. The policeman and the young man withdrew, grinning. Presently the young man walked away with his hand straying involuntarily to his breast pocket, where were a note-book and a very sharp pencil. Thus did Romance retreat temporarily from the immediate vicinity of the unconscious Elvira Jane. Alas, Elvira Jane, that the poetry of circumstance should have knocked—nay, pounded—at your door, only to find you oblivious.

Softly Miss Abby and her host proceeded through the Joralemon kitchen and pantries to the library, where Miss Abby remained while the master of the house mounted the stairs to prepare the way for his unexpected guest. He found, as he had anticipated, that the spare chamber was in readiness for the advent of his sister, Mrs. Cardiff, at some still unspecified time within a day or two, and would, therefore, serve the present purpose admirably.

Accordingly Miss Abby was soon installed therein, wondering, excited, and a little horrified at this very unexpected turn of events. With vague apprehension she

surveyed herself in the mirror of the dressing-table. Never before had the eye of man beheld Miss Abby's hair in such delightful and improper disarray. Her cheeks were pink with excitement, and her eyes were as wide as those of a startled child. She looked distinctly pretty, and womanlike, she knew it—and was inarticulately glad. When she had crept into the waiting bed sleep was long in coming; but it did come eventually, and lasted the longer for the delay.

The next morning when she awoke the pangs of recollection promptly assailed her. That which the night before had partaken of the nature of a bad dream, from which she should presently awaken, now revealed itself as insuperable reality, a ridiculous predicament from which she must somehow extricate herself. Had Mr. Joralemon informed his housekeeper of the involuntary guest, or had he not? Uneasily Miss Abby rose, and tip-toeing to the door, opened it a crack by way of investigating the situation. The aroma of coffee argued that some one was stirring below stairs. While the perturbed lady was trying to decide what to do next, she heard foot-steps on the front porch, and then the insistent peal of the door-bell.

The housekeeper, Mrs. Wilson, made her way heavily to the door and opened it, with the effect of admitting a veritable torrent of voluble exclamation, which, however, ran harmlessly off the impassive object thereof. Mrs. Cardiff had arrived without having been preceded by the usual telegram. After her came the cabman, cheerfully hanging the lady's trunk along on its corners.

"Carry it up to the first room on the right—and be careful of the walls, mind," directed Mrs. Cardiff, with the air of a general handling battallions. "My room is ready, Wilson, I suppose?" she added. "Of course you knew I was coming. Have you breakfast ready? Is Mr. Joralemon up? Do you know of a good laundress? I want one right away that can do a fine muslin. I had a wretched night on the sleeper. Do you—"

But at this juncture Wilson, who with Mrs. Cardiff had preceded the cabman up the stairs, threw open the door of the first room on the right, and Mrs. Cardiff's

inquiries were frozen upon her lips by the amazing spectacle of Miss Abigail Porter petrified into a pink flannel statue in the middle of the room. Mrs. Wilson's mouth opened involuntarily, to speak, and closed silently in sheer impotence of astonishment. Then, the three women recovering their tongues at the same instant, there was a singular chorus of that involuntary exclamation of the disconcerted, "I beg your pardon!"

"Hasn't Mr. Joralemon told you about me?" gasped Miss Abby to Mrs. Wilson.

Mrs. Cardiff's mind leapt instantly into the saddle of a familiar nightmare. "Are you—by any chance—married to Mr. Joralemon?" she inquired stonily.

"Oh, no, no, no!" came from Miss Abby, in agonized accents. "I had never spoken to him until last night, when my door blew shut and I was locked out. Mr. Joralemon insisted that I should come in here. I am Miss Porter. I live next door. Won't somebody please get word to my maid to bring my clothes? I can't go home this way."

"A most extraordinary affair," commented Mrs. Cardiff, smoothly, with an air of having mental reservations, "most singular. Wilson, send at once for the lady's maid and—er—clothing."

"Hello, Maria," came the hearty voice of Mr. Thomas Joralemon, approaching from the front of the house, "why didn't you let a fellow know when to expect you?"

"Please shut the door," begged Miss Abby, in tones of agonized entreaty.

Mrs. Cardiff accordingly shut the door, with herself outside confronting her brother.

"Thomas," she said sternly, "you always were a crazy one, but will you be good enough to explain that lady's presence in that room?"

"I certainly will," returned her brother, with some warmth, and thereupon delivered himself of an explanation brief, to the point, and containing some pertinent comment upon such as implied hidden mysteries in a mere act of neighborliness.

Elvira Jane, being duly apprised of the plight of her mistress, soon appeared giggling nervously, and bearing a heterogeneous burden of wearing apparel. En-

countering Mr. Joralemon in the upper hall, she giggled afresh, and made an embarrassed dash toward the room to which she had been directed. When the door had closed upon her she exclaimed joyously to Miss Abby:

"Lawsy me! Ain't this the greatest you ever see? I never laughed so in my life."

"Laughed!" wailed Miss Abby. "Elvira Jane, it is the most dreadful thing that ever happened to me. I never was so mortified in my life. How can I ever look those people in the face again, I don't know."

"It's awful romantic, anyhow," commented the little maid, licking her lips with the relish of it, "meetin' at midnight, an' all that."

"Be silent," commanded Miss Abby, in as nearly terrible a voice as she had ever been heard to employ. "Nothing is romantic that is pure accident."

"I thought that was just it," protested Elvira Jane, with the persistence of the spoiled servitor of a lone woman, and mentally comparing Miss Abby with her favorite heroines.

Mr. Joralemon's invitation to breakfast, presently forthcoming, was firmly declined by Miss Abby, whose mind was adamant in the conviction that she could never, never again talk to her whom she mentally characterized as "that woman." And very soon she, with Elvira Jane, took her way home, parting from the courteous Mr. Joralemon at his front door with as much dignity as was compatible with her keen sense of figuring in the rôle of a ridiculous old maid in a plight.

During all of that day a wistful face framed in blown curls of the softest brown color floated inconsequently in the imagination of Mr. Thomas Joralemon. He smiled at intervals, vaguely, dreamily, and would have been greatly at a loss to tell you why, had you caught him at it. That evening, over the claret at dinner, the vision strengthened as to hair and eyes, but there was a teasing uncertainty as to mouth which demanded either verification or disproof. Wherefore, about a quarter after eight, Mr. Joralemon, having finished his cigar to the running accompaniment of a monologue by his sister, put

on his hat and sauntered over to the front door of Miss Abigail Porter to make polite inquiries regarding the health of that lady. Having noticed in himself during the day a certain tendency to sneeze, as a result of the previous night's exposure, he was not unnaturally solicitous about possible similar indisposition on the part of his neighbor.

The little maid, beaming an approving, not to say ecstatic, welcome, admitted him. Yes, Miss Porter had caught cold. No, it was not very bad. Would he sit down? She would see. And Elvira Jane danced up the stairs to announce the visitor.

Mr. Joralemon glimpsed with approval the spacious drawing-room into which he had been shown. It was simple and old-fashioned, restful with the absence of irrelevant *bric-à-brac*. It was furnished with good mahogany pieces of graceful lines, and was touched here and there to livelier color by well-chosen draperies and a few good pictures. It was obviously the room of a gentlewoman of traditions. Upon a low stand by the fireplace were several books in leather bindings. One of these the visitor picked up at a venture, and found it to be a volume of Maeterlinck. This was rather a surprise. He had not supposed that a feminine little creature like Miss Porter would care to ponder a strong man's mysticism; by which it will be seen that Mr. Thomas Joralemon had much to learn of the feminine makeup.

Miss Abby entered, and greeted Mr. Joralemon with a smile the serenity of which utterly belied her fluttering sensibilities. When she turned from her visitor to seat herself, an insistent desire to sneeze presented itself, and a lady-like explosion followed, duly muffled, however, in a ready handkerchief.

"Then you did catch cold!" exclaimed, Mr. Joralemon. "I was afraid you would."

"It is really nothing at all," she gasped, her delicate nose wrinkling involuntarily again in disproof of her assertion. This second catastrophe she managed to avert, however, her face scarlet with embarrassment.

Then they talked. They spoke of the

weather, of the lateness of the season, the visit of Mrs. Cardiff. Presently Mr. Joralemon ventured, "I see you read Maeterlinck."

"Yes," returned Miss Abby, seriously, "he knows things—a great many things—about silence, for instance."

Her visitor pricked up his ears with fresh interest. Any woman interested in the aspects of silence was a sufficient contrast to his voluble sister to command his careful attention. "Yes," he answered, gazing steadily, penetratingly, at the earnest face opposite, "silence is very revealing. Speech was invented for the concealment not of thought, but of other and deeper things—personality, for example, if we agree to call it that."

Miss Abby assented, and cast about desperately for something to say which should diffuse Mr. Joralemon's concentration upon her. There was an instant's awkward pause terminated by the simultaneous sneezing of Miss Porter and Mr. Joralemon. Involuntarily, irresistibly, they laughed at this unanimity of affliction, and the tension of the moment was relieved.

When, after a little more desultory conversation, Mr. Joralemon took his departure, Miss Abby settled down by the lamp in her cosy library to read the evening paper. For a few minutes she read placidly. Then, as her eye caught certain staring lines, the color flew to her face, and she read feverishly. This was what she read: "Rescues Beauty in Distress. Our distinguished fellow-citizen, Thomas Joralemon, nocturnally attired, attempts to scale the heights to Beauty's window in order to open the door for Beauty, who shivers without, thrust upon a cold world by a spring-lock. The gallant Joralemon unhappily brought to bay by a policeman, who mistook him for a wicked house-breaker." There was much more in the same vein, without, however, any mention of Miss Porter's name. When she had finished the article Miss Abby laid her head on the table and wept. It was too awful. Her identity would be suspected by everybody who knew her. That young man must have been a reporter for the *Telegram*. How could he hold people up to ridicule in that way? Had Mr. Jor-



alemon seen it? That somehow seemed the worst of all.

But Miss Abby survived it, as people do survive things, and was even able to greet Mr. Joralemon lightly when he appeared the next evening for the purpose of expressing his deep regret concerning the newspaper notoriety given to their little adventure.

Two or three days later Mr. Joralemon strolled over to inspect Miss Porter's sweet peas, which were beginning to make a respectable showing. And thus, in one way and another, did the gentleman form a habit of neighborly intercourse, which to the ill-concealed delight of Elvira Jane came to present, during the summer, after his sister's departure, the serious aspect of "attention" to Miss Abigail Porter. With bated breath did Elvira Jane note the evolution under Miss Abby's skillful fingers of an unusual number of dainty stocks and belts. With hearty approval she observed the disappearance of Mr. Joralemon's grizzling whiskers, and the consequent emergence to public view of a good chin and a kindly mouth. He looked ten years younger. He began to wear fancy waistcoats. He undertook the supervision of Miss Abby's garden. He invited her to attend a series of summer concerts, and she accepted. She consulted him about a troublesome mortgage. She invited him to tea, to the immense excitement of Elvira Jane. From the latter's point of view it was undoubtedly a delightful romance, by which she was so stimulated as to manifest, sympathetically, increased interest in him of the bow-legs and the broken nose. In fact, as the time of the annual excursion of the Ivy Leaf Social Club drew near she resorted to positive, undeniable blandishments. She argued that she might as well have some fun also.

One day Elvira Jane suggested timidly to Miss Abby that you could get rats at the department stores for twenty-five cents.

"Get what?" asked Miss Abby, puzzled.

"Rats—for your hair—to wear under a pompadour," answered the little maid eagerly. She yearned to see Miss Abby look "real stylish."

"Like yours?" queried Miss Abby, with a faint smile.

"Yes, Miss Abby; I could do your hair for you. I'd love to. I think it would be real becomin' that way."

Miss Abby shook her head, with some amusement, as she regarded Elvira Jane's marvellous coiffure. "I think not," she said.

It cannot be supposed that Miss Abby was unconscious of the drift of her affairs, nor did she manifest any aversion to the logical outcome thereof by any of the several means employed by women under such circumstances. But she drifted, refusing to face the matter squarely, and when one evening in August Mr. Joralemon asked her to marry him she refused him, with an intensity of feeling most unexpected, even to herself. She couldn't, and that was all there was to it. Not only did she suffer sheer panic, all at once, at the thought of taking so tremendous a step, but so vividly did the beginning of their acquaintance rise before her excited imagination, that the whole thing seemed ridiculous, and its termination like that of a farce-comedy. From this idea she shrank with all of a gentlewoman's delicacy, morbid of course, but none the less real for that.

Mr. Joralemon begged her to consider it, to get used to it. He was sure that if she thought about it for a while it would seem different to her. There was no one else?

No, there was no one else. She liked him very much—but—

"You have no right to sacrifice us both to an idea, I think," he said gently. "You will change your mind some day. I shall be waiting." And thus, with some dim perception of the reason of Miss Abby's shrinking, he patiently resolved to bide his time.

But that which Mr. Joralemon was forced to leave to time was, after all, very simply accomplished by Fate, in the person of Maria Joralemon Cardiff, that being the way she was wont to sign her name as president of the State Federation of Women's Clubs. Mrs. Cardiff's initial attitude toward Miss Porter in a pink kimono had been modified only on the surface toward Miss Porter in a blue silk shirt-waist suit, or other conventional garb. Mrs. Cardiff, be it said, was one of



those "intuitive" women who do not trouble to change their feelings when they are logically obliged to change their minds. Her first feeling about Miss Abby had been that she was in some sort an interloper, and the feeling persisted. Her visit to her brother in May had terminated without any exchange of civilities between the two ladies, Miss Abby having pleaded the indisposition resulting from her cold as a reason for not calling.

It would be delightful to be able to set forth Miss Abby as the most amiable of her sex, but if the truth must be told, she found herself possessed of the most unreasoning dislike of the garrulous Mrs. Cardiff. However, when that lady bore down upon her brother's establishment again in September, and Mr. Joralemon asked Miss Porter to call, she swallowed her feelings and went.

"Thomas is such a confirmed bachelor," Mrs. Cardiff was saying sweetly, "that I have to come once in a while to look after him. I do hope no designing woman will ever get hold of him, because he isn't in the least adapted to matrimony."

Miss Abby gallantly responded with a detached commonplace, as if the subject of Mr. Joralemon's affairs bored her, and Mrs. Cardiff rambled on to a discussion of preserved pears.

Several dreary days followed, during which Miss Abby refused all but tea and toast, and Elvira Jane despaired over the continued absence of Mr. Joralemon. Elvira Jane's vicarious romance appeared to be crumbling; wherefore she wept over the dishwater and murmured, "Poor dear! Whatever can be the matter?" And added inconsequently, "The brute!" and later, after a little more pondering, "The cat!" Which showed that Elvira Jane's activity of mind eventuated in a conclusion not altogether foreign to the truth.

In the fullness of time—just a week, to be exact—Mrs. Cardiff arrayed herself in rustling silks and the panoply of righteousness, and returned the call of Miss Abigail Porter.

After the exchange of various commonplaces anent the weather and tomato catsup, Mrs. Cardiff exhibited her weak spot with the fatuity of a child charged on no account to betray a Christmas secret.

"I always come to visit Thomas when house-cleaning time comes," she purred. "You know, after all, we can't expect a housekeeper to be very much interested. Not but that Thomas is very comfortable with Wilson. No other mode of life would suit him in the least. He is not at all a family man. Not that he doesn't like women. Of course you have seen that he does, in a general way. I hope no one will ever mistake his chivalry to the sex for a more personal devotion. That would be so unfortunate."

She paused to observe the effect of her words, but Miss Abby was nothing if not thoroughbred, and her expression was politely impersonal. A tiny hint of a smile was apparent in the corner of her mouth as she replied, "Yes, very unfortunate."

Then, as Mrs. Cardiff prattled about a variety of subjects, Miss Abby was filled with strange and growing exhilaration. The light of resolve filled her gentle brown eyes; her heart swelled within her. Her feelings were, in truth, complex, but her thought was simple and perfectly clear, and consisted of these three words, "I'll do it."

As soon as the front door had shut upon Mrs. Cardiff Miss Abby walked steadily to the telephone.

"Main 1168," she said. "Is Mr. Joralemon there? Oh, good afternoon, Mr. Joralemon. Yes, this is Miss Porter. If you will come in this evening I shall have something to say to you. What did you say? No—yes—good bye." And she rang off.

Exactly twenty minutes later Mr. Joralemon appeared at the front door of Miss Abigail Porter. He found Miss Abby in the library. She was smiling, but her lips were tremulous.

"You wished to see me?" he said, in his usual direct way.

"Yes—that is, I—don't you understand?" She had turned away from him, and was staring out of the window.

"Abby—do you mean—"

She nodded. "It was all my wretched pride, I think. I couldn't bear to marry you because—oh, you know why. We have been all over that."

"Yes," he said gravely, and waited.

"Well," she went on, "today I have learned that I am proud of loving you, and proud that you love me. It is a more comfortable kind of pride than the other, I think."

The events which immediately followed left Miss Abby much flushed, with shining eyes. Presently Mr. Joralemon said, sighing, "I must go. Maria will be waiting dinner for me."

"I wonder how she will like it," murmured Miss Abby, innocently.

That night at dinner, of which Mr. Joralemon partook with uncommon enjoyment, that gentleman finally said: "Maria, some time ago I asked Miss Porter to marry me, and she refused. It cut me up a good deal."

"Refused!" gasped Mrs. Cardiff, indignantly. "Refused you? She must be crazy. She didn't mean it."

"Oh, yes, she meant it at the time, but something seems to have occurred that has made her change her mind. She sent

for me this afternoon, and—well, we're engaged. I hope you will wish me happiness. I consider myself a very lucky man."

The dazed expression in Mrs. Cardiff's eyes gave place to one of comprehensive understanding, and swallowing hard she said, "I hope you will be very happy, Thomas."

"Thank you, Maria. I am sure I shall be, and I trust she will."

Meantime Elvira Jane was circling, fascinated, around the shining face of her beloved mistress. Finally youth and ardor could no more be restrained, and Elvira Jane threw herself on her knees by Miss Abby and exclaimed, "Oh, Miss Abby, has he? Are you going to?" Then, beseechingly, "Oh, you will, won't you?"

"Yes, I'm going to." And the smiling Miss Abby kissed the adoring Elvira Jane on the forehead. Elvira Jane wept rapturously.

## Fetters of Brass

BY LEO WESTMEATH CRANE

"Fetters of Brass!" Oh! Ye Underlings!  
Know ye the wrath of fettered kings?  
Chastened, and humble, and slow are we,  
Bearing your burdens patiently;  
Sick of the galls of your caravans,  
Slaves to ye Pygmies, We, Titans!  
Soften the bonds and our sufferings;  
'Ware ye the wrath of fettered kings!

—*Chant of the Restless Herd.*

His Highness stood over against one of the walls, where the bricks glowed yellow in the sunlight, and from the crevices of which buzzed in and out the flies. There was shade under the wide gallery, and it was cool near the fountain with its ancient looking palms, but His Highness preferred the east wall of the courtyard in the afternoon. He would sway sleepily in the heat, his little eyes blinking wisely, his great soft ears lifting now and then. He had come to look on this courtyard as his very own. But few people, they attendants of low caste, entered it, and these reverently avoided his ponderous body,

looking upon him with admiration from afar.

Only Gootcha had the confidence of His Highness. Gootcha was a hillman, and he knew the intricate language of many elephants. And Gootcha had instilled into the guileless heart and mind of His Highness the presumption that he was something of wondrous worth and dignity, having no superior in the herds, which was true, and but one among men, which was an exaggeration worthy of a hillman. The little wicked-looking man, who sometimes walked with the beautiful lady of the upper gallery, Gootcha proclaimed as the Mighty One, Keeper of the Hills and Master of all Monarchs, before whom His Highness must kneel in obedience. Gootcha told these things into the ear of His Highness as he rubbed him down with a cake of sandstone.

For a long time, however, there was a grave suspicion in the mind of His High-

ness that Gootcha was a wondrous liar. He knew that by virtue of strength, he was the Mighty One, and His Highness wondered in what peculiar way was this nasty thin person superior.

A long time he was left in ignorance. Then, one day, the whole thing began to work out, as a string unravels from the knitting. Because he had stepped on the toes of a man who ventured too close with food, that fellow had shrieked out in much pain and had rolled upon the ground, crying. His Highness looked upon the grovelling man contemptuously. The noise brought to the upper gallery's balustrade a lithe figure, wrapped in a green robe. His Highness looked up at this man. He seemed a person of some authority, though he had never been in the courtyard before. And the man shouted something to Gootcha, at which that slave caught up a cruel spear and thrice plunged it into the soft parts of His Highness' leg, causing him to groan and whimper for a long time. Now, indeed, thought His Highness, amid snuffles, this new green-robed devil is greater than the Mighty One.

Next day Gootcha petted him into a milder mood, telling him that the man of the green robe was a favorite, and much loved. But some day, Gootcha prophesied, he would be amply revenged, for trouble was brewing about the favorite's head like the gathering of thick clouds upon a mountain-top. From which His Highness felt great consolation, and day by day, waiting, he lolled against the east wall of the courtyard, watching the upper gallery, expectant.

One afternoon it seemed the world slept wearily, worn out by the grievous weight of its sins. Even the flies dozed as they went from place to place, going off altogether and falling, catching themselves in sudden flight and darting frantically into the thick atmosphere. The sunlight hung down in the quiet courtyard as a veil of glinting meshes. When the hot wind climbed over the wall, it had to fight this hanging aside, and the wind had grown weary of the effort.

Some one began playing on a pipe. The fine, sweet sounds came from behind the screens of the upper gallery, where

dwelt the women. His Highness twisted his one ear lazily, raising it, listening: the pipe weaved a strange tune, arabesque, capricious, and one that filled the brain of His Highness with a peculiar unrest. Its little fancies and running trills were sweet and yet tormenting.

"Fee,—fee,—lah, lah, lalalah,—" ran the air, prettily.

Then sounded a cry, high-keyed, fearsome. His Highness started from his half dream into a nervous anticipation. He could hear scuffling, half-running footsteps. A man staggered out on the upper balcony, panting as if he had fought for his life.

Now the music of the pipe had not ceased. It continued as the singing of a child in a death chamber. His Highness felt that some one ought to smother the pipe, if they could not save the man. But its fanciful "Fee—fee—lah, lah, lalalah,—" trilled on perfectly, without pause, without a tremor of hesitation. The man uttered a low cry. Fear showed in his every movement, in his staring eyes, his hysterical action. At the same time His Highness recognized in him the gentleman of the green robe, and snorted in subdued delight. The fellow crouched up against the wall of the gallery, watching all the while the door out of which he had come. His Highness had seen antelope act so when a lion was near-by in the long grass. It was the great white fear, gnawing into the heart.

An instant later the master appeared. And the two men fought, one convulsed with the viciousness of an animal which has been ill-treated, the other with the bravery of despair. Then the favorite was felled by a heavy blow. And without a moment's indecision, the Mighty One caught up his helpless form, swung it across the gallery rail, and with an effort cast it down into the courtyard. His Highness shuddered, closing his little winking eyes. But he could not shut out the hideous noise of the man's striking the stones.

These things happened in a breathing space. During it His Highness had stood as if carved in relief from the yellow wall; during it had the pipe played its plaintive saraband, "Fee—fee—lah, lah, lalalah—"

Then His Highness threw off the spell of interested horror which had so enwrapped him. He lurches out toward the fountain, trumpeting wildly, after the nervous manner of young elephants. He knew he could never forget the awful monotony of that music. To him it seemed to have conjured the man's death. His Highness rolled his head about impatiently and squealed when the attendants came. But, though he might come to live centuries, as Gootcha said, the thin, tragic voice of the pipe, indifferent, careless, cruel, would haunt him always.

After this His Highness feared the Mighty One, and he was glad when a sickness came upon the country, driving those high enough to be driven to the cool hills, and leaving him to the quiet enjoyment of the courtyard. For whole days at a time the place was silent, save for the twitter of parrots, the drone of winged specks, and the low splashing of the water in the cracked basin.

But he who prefers to be alone enjoys silence only when it is his choice, and so the black mood came upon His Highness. He suffered from depression which lasted from one day into another. The attendants feared him, for they heard his wilful mutterings. He felt himself alone and despised. He threatened Gootcha, and even that faithful one was forced to neglect him. Entirely forsaken, the temper of His Highness was nasty, and he spent the days groaning.

Then appeared a strange man, who gleamed white in the sun, and who talked impressively with Gootcha. His Highness suspected that something concerning his welfare was about to occur, and this was confirmed when Gootcha bade him a "good bye" which was choked with many tears.

It was when they attempted to lead His Highness from the courtyard that he rebelled. But they seduced him into captivity by the aid of two treacherous cow-elephants, who walked beside him and were lavish in their caresses. Like many a giant before him, he knew not his own will. They went down country, following the descent of the hills. When they came in sight of the sea, His Highness made another feeble resistance, but

they fed him many lies. And the female devils sold him into slavery and chains; and going forth they sought new conquests.

Kindness brought His Highness into the portal of a new life. He was petted and groomed and fed. So, after a long time, the hills became as a memory, like a blur upon a polished mirror, dimming, fading with each passing day. He was a king still; dignified he remained, the strength of him undiminished and superb. He held himself erect in proud consciousness of his regal worth. So, after many years, during which the recollection of that quiet courtyard was completely blotted out, he found himself lolling beneath a dirty gray canopy, huge and looming, aloft a myriad of ropes and poles. Sometimes about him surged a hoarse, curious throng. Each day was a splendid carnival, colored with tinsel and scarlet cloths and trappings of gold, and ever in his ears sounded the loud braying of brass horns, accompanied by the clang of cymbals, rude and unmeasured.

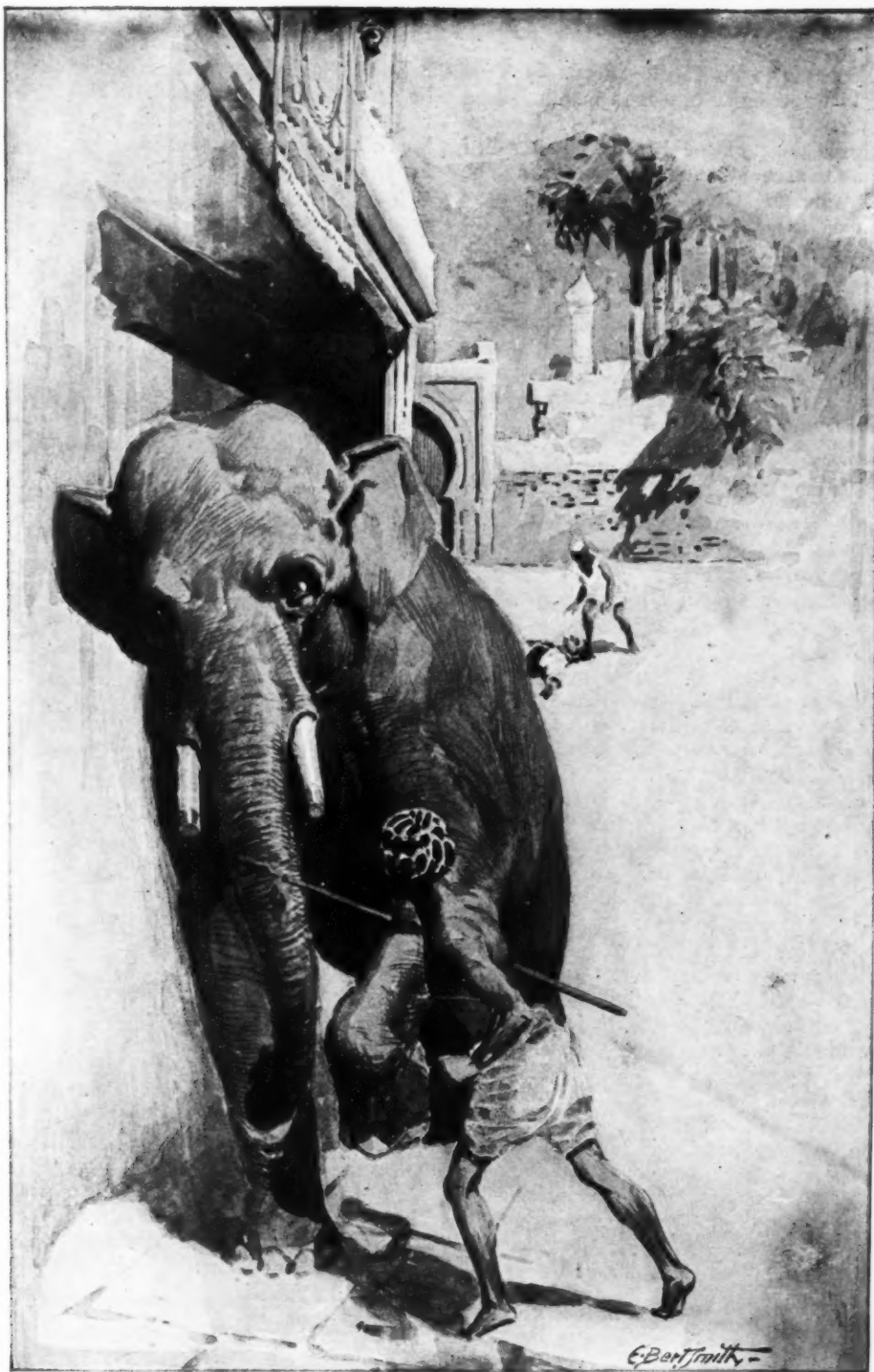
In those first days of exile, when the memory of Gootcha was dimming, every one had conspired to abuse His Highness. At least so he thought. They neglected him, worried him, brought him to sickness, so even to this day he had made few friends. But Bowers he loved tenderly, for Bowers knew what there was in his heart. Bowers was a slim individual with a thirsty-looking face. His eyes were weak and his hair shaggy, unkempt. About his countenance was a something suggesting power long abused, a strength suffering eclipse, and the shadow which threatened was that of the bottle. Only that week, for perhaps the thirtieth time, had the boss pleaded with him concerning this.

"You'll sure hev' to stop it, Bowers," he had said.

The man addressed sat up from under the tent-ropes to make answer, to defend himself, to assert his rights.

"Why will I hev' to stop it?" he asked sharply, but his words wandered off into a soft indecision. There was nothing emphatic about Bowers at this moment. The incisive voice, demanding, compelling respect, with which he influenced the





DRAWN BY EDGAR BERT SMITH

"His highness lurched out toward the fountain."



elephants to his bidding, was now loose and wavering as of a man who has been sick.

The boss of the Big Top had called him to account, and he was a person to be considered. Ordinarily he would have fired Bowers without hesitation for his implied impudence, and would probably have had him kicked off the lot, according to ancient custom, but the boss of the Big Top had no confidence in Smathers, who was the only eligible to succeed in the management of the herd. Smathers would have had a strenuous try at it though, had it not been for the consideration of another and a greater force. This was His Highness.

No one save Bowers had ever been able to secure even the passing good will of the big animal, and without Bowers His Highness refused to obey, refused to move himself, refused to eat. His Highness in that mood was a very ugly customer. He promised unknown and unimagined things. The boss of the Big Top would as readily welcome a cyclone, and with Bowers kicked off the lot he knew it was inevitable. So he patiently remonstrated with the man. The diplomacy of the boss was grand.

"Yeh'll hev' to cut it out, Bowers," he said, his face showing plainly the serious sadness within him. "It'll on'y be the worse for yeh. Why, this drink'll kill yeh, an' then where'll yeh be? Better take no long chances. An' ain't yeh got no pride? Think wot a valuable man yeh'd be if yeh'd on'y quit boozin'. Say yeh'll quit, an' yeh'll get a raise without callin'."

"I'll promise," eagerly assented Bowers, struggling to his feet.

But the boss of the Big Top was wise in his experience. He did not manage with autocratic rule one hundred and fifty sledge-swinging barbarians during show season for nothing. He was not to be caught by a verbal sincerity. Long had he known the awful thirst of Bowers.

"Well," he reflected, "stay sober—mind ye, strictly sober—for six weeks straight. Then yeh can hev the raise, if I hev' to make it outer my own dough. But no quiet boozin'. Understand! Now, hustle 'round an' mollify that ancient colossus."

Bowers gave him a sheepish glance, then he shambled off to where His Highness was chained. A great gilded wagon, the heaviest in the show, acted as an anchor for the right fore-leg, while the left was chained to a monster stake. His Highness considered this enforced idleness a degradation. Were it not for the stake, which could not be stirred, he would have demolished the gilded wagon in a very short space. His Highness was groaning and rolling his ponderous skull about, as if he had a headache, but he was really plotting deviltries. Bowers did not hesitate. He confronted this mammoth creature without fear, for Bowers had with him the confidence of many years in the show business, and the knowledge of many elephants. He was a frail man, stoop-shouldered, slim, weak of the eyes, and with thin, unkempt hair. His face spoke of the mastery of drink. But Bowers had not yet lost his nerve. He halted before His Highness, swaying a trifle.

"Ye'll be goin' rogue some day," he commented, "an' then where'll ye be? They'll shoot yer. Haven't I advised ye all these years? An' if they don't shoot yer, they may hang yer. Choke yer—ain't that pleasant? A long rope an' two hundred men pullin'. That's what ye'll git. An' I've been offerin' ye my plain advices."

His Highness stopped rolling his head, and looked at Bowers as a child caught in a forbidden act. There came into his eyes a suspicious look of shame. He was in the nasty position of having to listen to a friend's advice, which he must heed for the preservation of the friendship. His Highness truly loved Bowers. There was proof of this, for he allowed the man to stand before him unharmed.

"There's a rain comin' up," said Bowers, coaxingly. "The boss will want us to move in them cages. S'pose ye come along with me, ol' leather-back, an' help?"

His Highness grumbled.

"I can't move them cages by myself," protested Bowers.

His Highness shuffled about and grunted disconsolately.

"There, there," said Bowers, stooping down without fear and loosing the chains. With a slow, doubtful movement His

Highness stretched himself, and was free. He looked all about with a grave dignity. Then, following his friend and master, majestically he moved off, the motion of him as mighty and resistless as a steam-engine. His head still rolled a trifle, as amid snuffles and whines he told Bowers of his troubles, and for these nervous worryings he received a just sympathy.

Later in the evening, when the lights were roaring, and ten thousand preparations were being made for the reception of the "push," Bowers was hailed by the boss.

"Is he all right now?" asked the supreme showman.

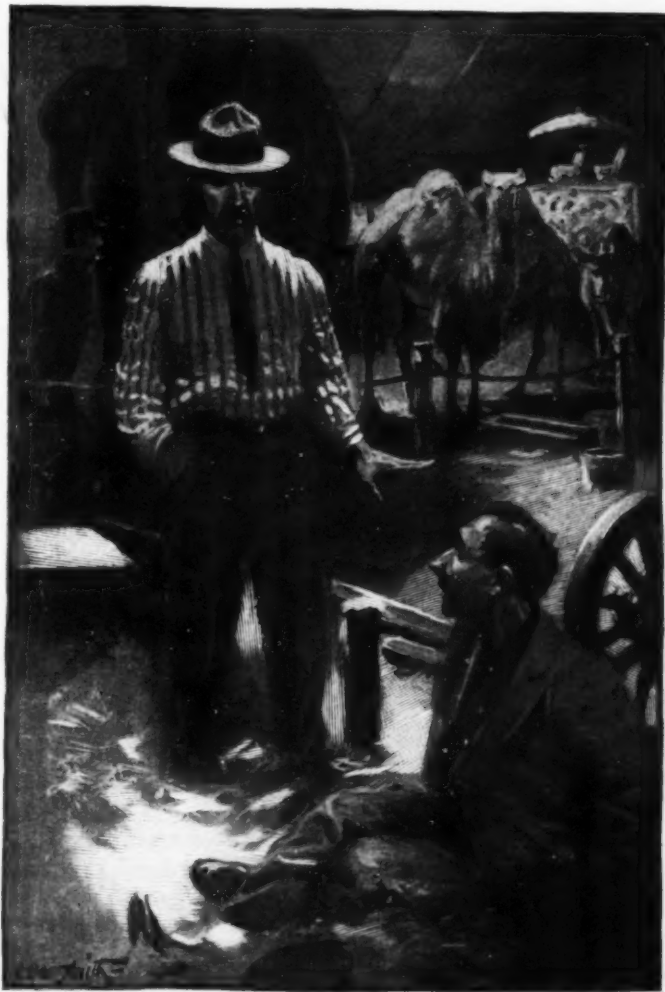
"Sure," replied Bowers, with some pride.

"Well—six weeks straight, an' yeh get yer raise o' coin. Understand? But no underhand rackets, Bowers—no boozin' on the side. You've gotter deliver the goods—dry goods."

"Leave it to me," said Bowers, a resolution in his tone.

His Highness had lived through many experiences, and he knew when he was being ill-treated. He was willing and ready to work when his superb services were fairly appreciated, but he disliked imposition. Whenever Bowers disappeared, which he did at certain, though somewhat irregular intervals, His Highness came to the inevitable dissatisfaction of neglect, and he suffered the ignorance of men who cared not for his well-being. Without Bowers, His High-

ness was lonely, as lonely as he had been in the old days, when like a child that he was he had mourned the absence of Gootcha. At these times the evil depression would come and sit in his sensitive brain. Grotesque fancies, assuming horrible proportions, would incite him to terror. A strange longing for a sort of dream country, so vague as to preclude a clarity of realization, would haunt him, and the dimly remembered smells of the damp ricefields encouraged his sulkiness and embittered his exile. Bowers could smooth away these blue-toned periods,



DRAWN BY EDGAR BERT SMITH

"You'll sure hev' to stop it, Bowers."



DRAWN BY EDGAR BERT SMITH

"Bowers is pinched."

for Bowers knew things above the thoughts of showmen.

Four long weeks went by. The show, like a comet, plunged along its predestined course. Bowers kept himself straight. Great was the desire upon him at times, and his battles were lengthy, but he did keep himself straight. The thirsty look did not leave his face, though his eyes cleared somewhat, and his skin assumed a human color as the purplish blotches gradually faded into a virtuous tone.

During all this time His Highness was as a little child, filled with cheerful happiness and much sincere peace. His routine was easy, well nourished, and considered intelligently. The work was measured with justice, and rewarded by kind words, honestly spoken. In the street parades he walked free, unhampered, covered with an embroidered cloth which trailed on the ground; upon his head, easily balancing, rode his friend and protector, radiant in the garb of the Indies; all of which His

Highness hugely enjoyed, for it reminded him of the old magnificent days when the world was a-glitter with gold in the gorgeous land of his birth. And he walked proudly unattended, the herd following in their proper places, for was he not His Highness?

But one night Bowers lowered his colors in defeat. A friend insisted that he take a drink. The work had been heavy that day, and the waters of the wells were filled with the abomination of iron. Bowers was long in the terrible coils of temptation. There was in his mouth a subtle something which would not be stilled. And a delightful little devil tickled the ear of him with the argument that a man could take one drink and yet remain straight. Thousands did it every day, asserted the imp of the two-inch glass.

"Just one for the sake of ol' times," persisted the friend.

"Nope," said Bowers, shaking his head. "Nope, I've promised the boss, an' it means money to me."

"Oh! just one with me—"

"Nope—" hesitated Bowers, despondently.

"But—but, look a-here, ain't I been a friend of yours?"

"Well, then, if yer goin' to git mad about it," agreed Bowers, wetting his dry lips with his tongue, "we'll say one—no more, s'help me!"

But there were more. Drink followed drink in quick succession, and the arid soul of Bowers grew mellow. The boss of the Big Top, rewards, character, pride, His Highness, responsibility, everything forgotten, drowned in the dregs of the two-inch glass. Bowers kept it up all night, for his capacity was of a size. And he rounded out the dissipation by joyously mixing in a fight in the main street, for which indiscretion he was promptly jailed.

One of the canvasmen saw this inglorious finale.

"Bowers has been pinched," he reported on reaching the show grounds that morning.

"Wot fer?" anxiously inquired the boss.

"Drunk an' fightin'," answered the man, laconically. "He nearly busted a nice old gentleman's head down in the

big street. Tidy little crack it was. An' he's pinched—"

"Gawd!" said the boss of the Big Top, as if he were beginning a lamentation. "An' that swine of an elephant is just about ready fer a quadrille."

In that night His Highness had grown uneasy. Bowers had not put in his appearance when the show settled to sleep. His Highness felt the loneliness of the big tent keenly. He had eyed the boss with a wicked leer when that worthy made his late round. The boss interpreted all the devilry of the little eyes and felt afraid.

"He ain't had time to get real nasty yet," communed the boss with the man in the early dawn. "I've been to see the Grandee, an' he says bail out Bowers immediate. It won't cost so much with these rubes. A hundred will look like a bale of green from the mint. Then we'll dig out with Bowers hid somewhere. Anyway, some way, get him out fer Gawd's sake! else there'll be a ruction in this town to which a riot will look like a weddin' breakfast."

The man hurried away. A short time elapsed. Then he returned, a dejected look on his face.

"No use," he reported mournfully. "Ol' gent was hit right hard, an' they're goin' ter keep Bowers. I saw him—he's sober now, an' he wants to git out, but really, boss, it ain't not the least use. Shall we make ready for the come-on?"

The "come-on" was the street parade, a wonderful pageant of dazzling splendor in the mind of the press agent.

"Guess so—" replied the boss, thoughtfully. "Send for Smathers. Tell him I want to see him here right away."

Smathers came expectant.

"We've gotter go up against it," began the boss, introducing the painful subject. "Chain that restless devil, Highness, 'tween Betsy an' ol' Martha Washington, when we go on parade. We can't go without him, 'cause we've advertised the biggest hulk in the world, an' the others don't hold up to that promise. These rubes are a suspicious lot. But treat him careful, Smathers, 'cause this show ain't unbreakable like a rubber doll."

"What's up, boss?" asked Smathers.

"Bowers is pinched, curse him—" spitting to evidence his outrageous indignation.

"Whee!" whistled Smathers. He went after the harness of discipline with a look on his face like that which marks one approaching a forlorn hope.

"By Cripes!" muttered Smathers, earnestly, "this playin' tutor to a howlin' behemoth ain't no request o' mine!"

The parade proceeded through the town with much blaring of untuned instruments and rumbling of hollow dens. Along the street a mass of curious countrymen were arrayed, wild-eyed, open-mouthed, ejaculatory. It was not a large town, but the people had journeyed in from the surrounding country, carrying their bed and board. The charm of gold spangles, red tights, horns, plumes, and booming drums, the merriment of gibbering clowns, the mystery of carts with gilded masks, the interest of the chariots, anciently Roman, the Oriental wonder of the elephants and big-kneed camels, together with all the minor pomps, colors, and mildewed finery of the monster caravan, drew them with the strength of an enormous magnet. They acknowledged mutely its resistless draw. For the day, Time turned backward, and ushered them into the forgotten valleys of childhood.

The pageant swept by in its regally nonchalant way, which is its keenest allurements, receiving obeisance with a calm assurance, almost contempt, which but few kings, and they despots, may affect. Through languorous eyes the show deigned to notice the admiring crowd. They did not resent its arrogant hauteur. The march of the show is one triumphant conquest. About it is ever an atmosphere of true greatness. On, on, grander, more than brilliant, irresistible, having a radiance unsurpassed and a poise of glorious magnificence. On to Mount Olympus! The show is immortal! It will live forever!

And all would have gone well with this one, had the route not encircled the town jail.

Bowers had been told of the unsuccessful attempts to liberate him, and he had withdrawn into his usual post-drunken



grouch. At least, after much begging, he secured a place at a window patterned with iron bars, where he was attended by a constable. They could not find it in them to deny a pleasure so supreme.

Along came the street boys, the vanguard of all truly great arrays. With a splendid glitter, a spectacular strutting, passed the show; with the hammering of drums and the sad boasting of horns, the clowns winking and capering, the chariot-eers grandly tugging at their steeds, the trainers dozing amid the lions and tigers of the two opened cages. Along came the wonderful elephants, swaying, jostling, stirring up a veil of dust, clumsy and slow. His Highness rolled ponderously between two females, linked to them, shackled. He should have been at the head of the herd, a division in himself. This was a position of shame. It demeaned him. He took the joyous cheering of the throng as venomous mockeries. Sullenly he marched along, snorting in suspicious rage.

Bowers noticed this air of distrust. He could not suppress a cry of advice, thinking to reassure the animal.

"Watch out there, Highness!" he counseled sagely. "Dress up, Highness, dress! Ain't I givin' ye advices, Highness!"

Immediately that portion of the parade consisting of the two females and the one big elephant, halted. The stoppage was as abrupt as that of a train, air-braked. The throng doubtfully wavered. His Highness threw up his head, trumpeting delightedly, his eyes ablaze with a new light. He saw Bowers in the window. Then he saw the wrathful constable dragging his friend away amid argument.

This was cause enough.

There was heard a shrill scream of rage in the street. The sedate Betsy was flung violently to one side, with the breaking of leather bands and the snapping of chains. Martha Washington, bruised and ruffled, went tumbling in the other direction. His Highness stood forth free, unbound. Quickly ran the attendants, but they were tied with discretion at the sight of him. His Highness eyed Smathers approaching, and that man felt that he was needed elsewhere.

No longer clumsy, slow, waddling. His

Highness wheeled, and started for the wide entrance to the jail. He swung along as a war-engine, the tons of him unchecked, and with a tremendous surge of his whole frame, struck the center of the door. A crashing of wooden panels, a splintering of bars, and its demolition was complete. Wrathfully he tossed aside the fragments of the wreck. Inside he plunged, a veritable colossus of destruction. The rending of partitions followed and the shivering of glass. The crowds of the street fled. A horrified squad of showmen gathered in the street, listening to the consternation.

"Here, here!" yelled the almost demented mayor of the town, flinging his pudgy arms about. "This thing must stop."

He addressed a contingent of speculative and helpless babes.

"He's in there, boss," said one of the men, vaguely.

His Highness was greatly pleased with himself. He felt that the debt of gratitude he owed Bowers had now been paid. He had redeemed the man from bondage and defilement, even as Bowers had so often succored him. His Highness took not into account the large sums of coin this had cost the show for the repairs to one town jail; he only felt a satisfaction and joy at his triumph. Again the caravan of marvels swung on its orbit, with Bowers safely packed away from inquiring constables.

But the inquiring mind of His Highness found itself considering these things as a problem. Why did the man go away at intervals, leaving him to the mercies of underlings? His Highness weighed all the evidence. Once he had seen Bowers talking excitedly with the boss. They were quarreling over a bottle, a little black bottle. The boss tried to take this thing away from the other, which was resisted. After the altercation, His Highness remembered three days of misery, because Bowers was not. Another time he saw the man drinking from this same bottle. Bowers took many gulps, and with satisfaction. His Highness saw plainly that from the depths of the bottle came pleasure—that the man loved it. A faint





DRAWN BY EDGAR BERT SMITH

"Inside he plunged, a veritable colossus of destruction."

feeling of delicate rage warmed the heart of His Highness as he considered this. Could the man care more for that insignificant thing than for his mighty friendship? Had it come to a point where they were to be divided by a handful of dingy glass? His Highness reached a conclusion. He believed the bottle exercised a potent charm. All the trouble came from it. It had the power to make Bowers maudlin, silly, nerveless, and caused him to abandon his loyal friends to loneliness and heavy labor unmeasured. His Highness determined to have no more of such a condition.

So, a few days later, when Bowers came into the tent, evasively, His Highness knew the time for understanding was close at hand. Bowers went to a place behind the elephant's corner carefully watching about. No one saw save His Highness. The tiny beetle-like eyes of that victim gleamed brightly, for he knew Bowers sought the bottle fetish. Bowers scooped down into the straw, and in a moment was drinking. Slowly approached His Highness. The long sinuous trunk darted out, plucked the bottle away, tossed it aside to destruction.

Immediately there came over the face of Bowers a severe change. He seemed to grow haggard; his eyes were filled with a mournful light; his lips quivered, his thin hands trembled, and like a demon he began to curse and storm. Picking up a cudgel, he belabored His Highness heavily, savagely, until he noted the dangerous gleaming of the animal's eyes. His Highness showed spiteful inclination, though he obeyed Bowers' growling command. The man chained him by the leg securely, and went out of the tent.

All that afternoon His Highness sulked, rolling his ponderous head as if it ached him. When the people paused to stare at him, he would rattle his chains ominously. He was in no easy mood. To make matters even worse, the Egyptian, who sold bangles in a little decorated booth nearby, began practicing a new lay on his little squeaky pipe. Wild thrills he produced from it, echoes of barbarism. Occasionally he would execute a difficult Oriental air, which was quite new because it was so old. Queerly fantastic were these

melodies. His Highness was sorely irritated by the noises. He flapped his long ears, but he could not flap away the piercing notes. They seemed to dance into his brain, wriggling about, bent upon his annoyance.

They began to develop hazy thoughts. Vaguely His Highness traveled back through the weary years until again he caught the damp, sweet smells of the rice fields. He could see them by moonlight, silvery, swampy places. Then he began dreamily to ascend hills. Many marches he made. The days grew hotter, the damp heat was succeeded by a rich golden sunlight, thick, clogged with visions. Suddenly, carelessly, the Egyptian's fingers ran over the stops, and the flute cried out: "Fee—fee—lah, lah, lalalah—" His Highness gave a convulsive start. All his mammoth body trembled. His great ears flapped and twitched nervously, his eyes lit up with anxious expectancy, he swayed to and fro awaiting the repetition. Again it sounded: "Fee—fee—lah, lah, lalalah—"

Then it all came plainly to him with a sweep that made him weak for the moment. A vile mist was driven away, as if before a keen wind, and he could see a crisp picture in sunlight. There lived again the courtyard and the flies, the upper gallery where the beautiful lady walked at evening; he could see the wide flags of the pavement, the gurgling fountain, cool and green-rimmed; he could hear the birds clattering volubly in the trees overhanging the wall. Then Gootcha came into the courtyard, dear old Gootcha, who had never once neglected him, never worshipped any other thing. And His Highness grew hot with a vicious rage, for there, spoiling his vision of a lost paradise, came Bowers, staggering. Gootcha had never smiled in that senseless way—Gootcha had never forsaken him—Gootcha knew no god of a bottle.

"Fee—fee—lah, lah, lalalah—" played the Egyptian monotonously. His Highness quivered, and his head rocked as if it felt thin pains. The agony of all his lost delights rushed upon him. Once he had been free, now upon his leg was a burning chain. And here came the man he had loved, trusted, redeemed, and who

had betrayed him. A malicious light flamed in the eyes of His Highness. The thin cord of forbearance was now stretched to the breaking point. Bowers neared him, swaying, leering—

"Fee—fee—lah—"

A film swept across the sight of His Highness. He could see nothing but a wide gallery, below it broad, smooth stones, and before him was a perfidious wretch garbed in green silk. His Highness gave a snort, and with a lunge and a rush, like the plunge of a battleship, he tore apart the chain. One instant he stood perfectly rigid, screaming triumphantly, malevolently, his trunk up-thrown in a wave of defiance, his whole poise exhibiting the strength of a mastodon.

Bowers tottered in his pathway. He noted the attitude of the beast, and uttered a command, but his voice was weak and pitiful. Then the great fury-spurred body swept with enormous strides toward him. Powerless, nerveless, Bowers stood still, his lips moving in mute appeals.

Like a snake from a tree whipped out the lithe trunk, seeking him, encircling him. But not in a caress did it touch the man. One brief instant was Bowers raised on high, trembling, limp—then, as a ball, he was flung downward.

His Highness having accomplished this, paused. He hesitated, as if bewildered, a quiet misery in his eyes. He uttered a low whine. Vast was the awful silence of the tent. And the man lay there before him, motionless, just as so many years before had stretched the favorite of the Mighty One, broken and still. His Highness, now gentle and distressed, awaited the coming of Gootcha, to once again explain these things.

The boss of the Big Top, walking through the tent, kicked his foot against something in the straw. He stooped down and picked up a little black bottle, about it the odor of the liquor.

"Poor Bowers!" he said.

## The House That Patty Built

BY MARGARET G. FAWCETT

A fortnight after Grand-aunt Susan Pennington's estate was settled and the three thousand dollars was paid over to that young woman and by her deposited in her father's bank, the entire Plough family with the exception of Patricia had assumed a resentful attitude toward the money. For between the family's fear and her friends' fears, that she would do something irretrievably foolish with the legacy and Patricia's anxiety lest she be persuaded into doing something unattractively sensible with it, the subject was discussed *ad nauseum* in season and out, until one night at the dinner table Patricia's father rose in his wrath and forbade further mention of it until Patty—it was by the diminutive she was best known—should make up her mind. His own advice was that she leave the money in the bank until the event of her marriage, when it was sure to prove of service. But Patty,

who was twenty-three and ultra modern, was by no means certain that she would, ultimately, select marriage as her career. Moreover, letting the money lie idle in the bank was an acknowledgment of inaction wholly out of accord with her up-and-doing spirit.

Fortunately for her peace of mind, the very morning following the pronouncement of her father's ultimatum her eye chanced upon the picture of a "perfectly adorable" cottage in an illustrated magazine, a cottage that seemed the pictorial realization of some inspired architect's dream. After her slim forefinger had twice made a triumphal tour through the ground floor plan—a plan that presented an extraordinary number of conveniences in return for a ridiculously small outlay of money—the fate of Grand-aunt Pennington's bequest was sealed. And friends and family agreeing that she could do

nothing more imprudent with her money than build, her resolve became unalterable. Her father, like most American parents, was too well trained to presume to dictate, but he did assure her heatedly that he'd be responsible for nothing. Her mother, upon whose still youthful shoulders rested the burden of rearing four younger Ploughs, each with an individuality as pronounced as Patty's, merely implored her to remember that she had duties to society that she could not afford to ignore.

There followed for Miss Plough days of pleasant planning, also a long procession of real estate agents who called at unseasonable hours. The latter were eyed askance by John, whose duty it was to open the Plough front door and by him ushered distrustfully into the library, where Patty, in a severe tailor-made, received them. The commission was ultimately earned by a progressive youth who had the foresight to carry with him, when he escorted her to the suburb to inspect his lot, a camp chair. Enthroned on this, the contemplation of a property that might become hers proved so delightful that she was moved to realize the potential, and terms were speedily arranged.

Work on the cottage was begun early in the summer, and Patty, who postponed her departure from town in order to superintend the builder, spent most of the time on her own premises. The day ground was broken she was too excited to eat any dinner. The question of whether she would have a tiny hall and a tiny reception room or a hall and reception room in one, as in the original plan, caused her a sleepless night. When the builder assured her he could manage an art chimney on the amount allowed, she wept with delight, though she was not quite sure she knew what an art chimney was. All her sex' instinctive love of home-building possessed her as she watched the structure rise. And in addition to this love there was a philanthropic zeal, for Patty had what she herself called serious views of life, and she felt that her cottage might very properly represent an ideal of architectural attainment to all benighted suburbanites. It was no part of her plan to

leave the interior decorating to the crude taste of a tenant, and in the joy of determining whether the guest chamber should have pink or heliotrope wall paper, and whether the dining room should be finished in Pompeiian red or old blue, she almost forgot that a dislike inspired by envy was beginning to color her thoughts of the prospective occupant.

Just as the last crowning touch, a plate rail in the dining room, had been added and paid for out of Patty's dress allowance, her mother unexpectedly asserted herself. Patricia must, without further delay, prepare to accompany the family on its regular summer outing. Whenever Mrs. Plough used that particular tone, Patty realized that it was wise for her to heed it, and reluctantly she handed over the key of her house to an agent and shook the dust of the city from her smart number two shoes. A fortnight after her departure the agent reported the cottage rented, and Patty had the satisfaction of waving the check for the first month's rent in the face of her disconcerted family.

The Ploughs returned to town the first day of October, and on the second day of their return Patty boarded a car and rode out to the suburb that her cottage enlightened. Alas! Better would it have been for her peace of mind had she never taken that ride. Have you ever seen, dear reader, a well-dressed, well-bred woman after some accident has pushed her hat rakishly over one eye? If you have you will know exactly how her cottage looked to Miss Plough. The windows were sadly in need of washing, the pane of one was broken, and the lace curtain that hung in the dining room had been tied by an impatient hand into a hard knot. And these are merely a few of the details that imparted an air of swaggering insolence to the cottage. It actually seemed to leer at Patty as she walked rapidly past it with burning cheeks.

Mr. Harold Bannerman, a good-looking and perfectly innocuous young man, was the junior partner of a very sound business firm made up besides of his father and his uncle. When Patty Plough selected the firm to be her agent, turning over to it the delicate task of selecting a suitable tenant for her beloved cottage, young Mr. Ban-



nerman rejoiced exceedingly, for ever since the young lady's *début*, he had worshipped humbly at her feet without any further encouragement than the careless acceptance by her of the flowers, books, and cotillon favors he had lavished upon her; and he hoped that her selection of the firm to transact her business was an evidence of the dawning of a warmer interest in him than she had hitherto evinced. He assumed full charge of her property, and consumed much valuable time every month composing beautiful notes to accompany the checks he faithfully remitted. It was a delicate and skilful combination of business and sentiment, and it was a coincidence that Mr. Bannerman happened to be dwelling upon it a trifle complacently one afternoon when Miss Plough entered his office with an excited flutter of skirts.

"I want those people put out of my house at once," she announced breathlessly and without preliminary as she sank into the chair he hastened to pull forward for her.

"But why—" began Mr. Bannerman, protestingly.

"They're utterly impossible," she interrupted him briskly. "Now, how soon can you get them out?"

"You'll have to tell me your objections, you know," he suggested, as soothingly as possible.

Patty hurriedly described the appearance of the cottage, and Mr. Bannerman wisely refrained from smiling.

"I'm extremely sorry," he said, gently. "Loring, the man who occupies it, seemed a decent sort of chap, and I thought we were very lucky to get so responsible a tenant."

"Responsible!" echoed Patty, scornfully. "I'd like to know what your idea of responsible is? Now, how soon can I get them out?"

Young Mr. Bannerman reached for "Somebody on Contracts," and explained sympathetically that, inasmuch as her tenant had a lease and that, inasmuch as the draping of lace curtains and the hanging of shades were very much a matter of taste, and that even the non-washing of windows constituted no ground for the breaking of a lease, she would have to wait until he investigated and found an offense the law would seriously consider.

Patty waved "Somebody on Contracts" haughtily aside and eyed her agent wrathfully.

"Do you mean to say I cannot do what I like with my own property?" she de-



DRAWN BY EMILE NELSON

"An ideal to all benighted suburbanites."



manded, in a voice that argued ill for the consummation of Mr. Bannerman's dearest hope.

"If I find that they have actually ill-treated the house, of course you can get possession of it," he explained, patiently. "But if it is merely a matter of the—ah—trifles you've mentioned—"

Patty rose with dignity, albeit her cheeks burned and her eyes flashed.

"I consider that you have been very remiss," she observed, freezingly. "Hereafter I will look after my house myself."

Mr. Bannerman hurried after her as she swept from his office, an envelope in his hand. He was young enough to be quite as angry as Patty.

"Here's a communication I received from your tenant today," he said, and distantly bowed her out.

As soon as she reached home she drew the enclosure from the envelope and with blazing eyes read the following note:

"Sir, it seems to me the laste the owner of this rathole kin do is to put in a gas stove. I am not going to burn me face cookin in a hot kitching and oblige, John Loring."

Rathole! It was the last straw. Patty's soul was stirred to its very depth. She pictured the ignorant writer of the note presiding over the dainty house she had built and wept angry tears.

The very next morning found her walking up the neat board walk that led to the cottage. When the walk was being laid she had pictured to herself the pride the tenant would take in planting a border of old-fashioned flowers on either side, but not a posy was there to be seen on the ill-kept lawn.

Concealing a doubtful spirit under a resolute demeanor, she mounted the steps, but before she could touch the bell, the door flew open and she found herself gazing at a coatless, collarless man whose brown eyes burned somberly under a shock of light brown hair.

"Thank God, you've come!" he cried. And before she could utter a word of protest he had seized her by the arm and had dragged her inside. She had a maniac to deal with! His manner left no room for doubt. The question was, what to do? But this her mad tenant gave her no

chance to answer. "This way!" he exclaimed, and literally pushed her down the hall and across the living room to a door that opened off of it, a door which Patty, even in her alarm, recognized as the entrance to the guest chamber. Trembling in every limb, she peered inside, and instantly her fear left her. A trundle bed stood in the center of the room, and on the pillow lay the pretty, flushed face of a little boy not more than four years old. His long lashes swept his cheeks, but his sleep seemed a stupor rather than a peaceful rest, and every breath he drew was answered by a hollow rattle in his chest. The man strode over to the bed and gazed down at the small sufferer.

"Bill, old man," he called softly, and Patty's eyes filled suddenly with tears. The man looked over at her.

"Come in, nurse!" he called impatiently. "You must see there's no time to lose."

"But I'm not a nurse," gasped the distressed Patty.

"The devil!" exclaimed her tenant, and for one fleeting second she thought he was going to come over and shake her. Then she put aside her fear and boldly entered the room and stood beside the trundle bed. "I think I can be of service until the nurse comes," she announced, with sudden resolution. "Have you a hot fire?"

"I'll build one," he answered, gratefully. "The cook has gone to get a prescription filled." But as he turned to leave the room a thought seemed to strike him. "Are you a book agent?" he asked, staring at her with puzzled eyes.

"I'm your landlord," she answered him, stiffly.

"Ah," was all the comment that he made, and disappeared.

Patty was perfectly familiar with their own nurse's method of procedure whenever any of the young Ploughs developed obstinate colds, and so by the time the real nurse arrived—a capable, middle-aged woman, who suggested as much by her manner as by her uniform endless sick-bed ministrations—the small invalid was in a perspiration, and the rattle in his chest was perceptibly fainter.

"Your wife has done exactly the right thing," said the nurse in response to the man's anxious inquiry. Patty blushed

violently, and her tenant stared at her and then jerked out:

"You are mistaken; my wife is dead. This young lady is—" He hesitated, and had Patty looked at him she would have discovered a humorous glint in the depths of his brown eyes—"our landlord," he concluded, suavely. The nurse politely busied herself with her small patient, and Patty resentfully gathered up her wraps. She felt suddenly very young and decidedly foolish.

"Of course there was some business," the man observed tentatively, as he escorted her respectfully to the door. "I am very sorry to have to ask you to postpone it."

"Another time will do," she answered hastily, and departed with an abrupt "Good morning."

Her feelings, as she boarded the car, were decidedly mixed. Her tenant piqued her curiosity, the small invalid aroused her sympathy and interest, but the condition of her cottage filled her with rage. For busy as she had been during the short time she had spent under its roof, she had observed that the woodwork was scratched, the pretty wall paper soiled, and that instead of an artistic arrangement of china on the plate rail that had taken the greater part of her month's allowance, there were, three disreputable looking pipes, a tobacco pouch and a match holder.

By means of the telephone she kept herself informed of the small invalid's progress toward recovery, and by the time he was reported entirely well rage over the condition of her cottage had choked every other feeling in Patty's breast. Taking counsel with herself only, she indited a note to her tenant asking him to call. She was



DRAWN BY EMILE NELSON

"He seized her by the arm and dragged her inside."

careful to set the time in the evening so that her demand would not interfere with his employment, and she received with relief and satisfaction his telephone message that he would obey her summons.

"John, I expect a—a person here this evening," she whispered to the servant; for she was desirous of avoiding the "I told you so" of the family. "When he comes, show him into the library."

"Very well, miss," he answered resignedly. He had no sympathy for Miss Patricia's varied charitable pursuits, and it was his opinion that she received altogether too many persons.

Her tenant came early. Evidently he had stopped on his way home from work.

Patty, having firmly made up her mind that she would not offer him her hand, was vaguely surprised to find him bowing over it. But after all, he was very clean and very good to look at in a rugged sort of way, she decided after she had inspected him carefully.

"How is William?" she asked, by way of preliminary. He stared at her for a moment with puzzled eyes.

"Oh, Bill, you mean!" he exclaimed, with sudden intelligence. "He's just as good as ever, thanks to your kindness." The look he gave her expressed more gratitude than his words, and Patty felt uncomfortable.

"I did nothing," she assured him, hastily; and then in a voice as business-like as she could command she told him that she would have to ask him to vacate the cottage.

"Why, may I ask?" he demanded, regarding her in astonishment. She hesitated for a minute and then, angered by the ironic glint in his eyes, plunged into the story of her wrongs. In her eagerness to impress upon him his unfitness as a tenant, she even mentioned the desecration of the plate rail. He listened politely to the recital, and nodded gravely when she had concluded. "I see how you feel," he said, "but you shouldn't blame Bill and me; you should blame the cooks."

"Cooks! How many do you keep?" she demanded, startled.

"None," he answered sadly. "That's the difficulty."

Patty refused to meet his smile. "The cooks are your affair, the cottage is mine," she assured him, coldly. "I'm afraid I cannot withdraw my notice."

"And I'm afraid Bill and I will have to decline to pay any attention to it," he retorted. "You see, we like the cottage."

Patty's eyes flashed. "It's my cottage, I believe!" she exclaimed, indignantly.

"Tenants have some rights, however, that even the most stony-hearted landlords are bound to respect." He tapped one of his coat pockets significantly. "Bill and I have a lease," he said.

"What has that to do with it?" she demanded crossly, wishing she had paid more attention to Mr. Bannerman's explanation.

"Everything," retorted her tenant, cheerfully. "It protects from sudden eviction the down-trodden renter."

Patty regarded him uncertainly. His face was grave, but, nevertheless, she had an uncomfortable feeling that he was laughing at her. Suddenly he drew his chair a little nearer to hers.

"Perhaps, O hard-hearted landlord, we can compromise," he suggested. "Find me a responsible cook, a cook who will stay, and I'll promise to remove the pipes from the plate rail and in the spring strew the front grass-plot with flowers."

Patty flushed resentfully. "This is not an intelligence office," she reminded him, snubbingly.

"I never should mistake it for one," he hastened to reply. "I wonder," pensively, "why intelligence offices were so named?"

Miss Plough made no response, and after a short silence he resumed genially: "Now, about our compromise—"

"We've made none," she interrupted him disdainfully.

"No, but I'm sure we shall," he assured her, undisturbed, and then went on persuasively to point out the advantages that must accrue to her, but Patty was thinking of the note he had written and of the opprobrious term "rathole."

"I can refuse to make any improvement you demand," she threatened.

"But I've made none," he protested. "I've always considered the cottage uncommonly well provided for."

Patty triumphantly handed him the note she had received from Mr. Bannerman. Her tenant read it through and then, much to her indignation, smiled.

"Although I'm not familiar with her chi-rography, I fancy Miss Bridget Mullane, our present cook, indited it," he hastened to explain. "I don't know that my handwriting is so good, but I have the advantage of the lady in spelling. I'm what you would call," proudly, "a natural-born speller."

"I'm sure I beg your pardon," said Patty. "The note was signed with your name, and naturally I concluded you had written it."

"Pray, don't mention it," he responded politely. Another silence ensued, a silence

distinctly uncomfortable to Patty, who had to admit to herself that it was her tenant who had scored so far in the interview. Suddenly she became conscious of an extraordinarily eager desire to reveal herself in a better light, and she found herself mentioning, in quite a friendly fashion, a certain Mrs. Murphy who, ever since her tenant had referred to his need of a cook, had been hovering in the background of her thoughts. He welcomed her concession so warmly that Patty's self-love was instantly soothed, and she employed her former tone of patronage when she mentioned the wages her protégé would probably demand.

"Bill and I can afford that," he assured her, and, after reiterating his thanks, rose to take his leave.

Most women love to manage, and Patty was no exception to the rule. With Mrs. Murphy willing to take advice, if diplomatically handled, it was not in Miss Plough's nature to resist a general supervision of affairs at the cottage. Unfortunately she did not always remember her protégé's garrulity. One morning Patty's tenant missed the hot bread that was usually plentiful at breakfast, and demanded an explanation.

"Sure, Miss Patty don't think it's good for th' little felly," said Mrs. Murphy.

"Miss Patty?" demanded her employer, lifting his eyebrows and frowning a little.

"Th' loidy who owns th' house, sor," his cook answered, and walked loftily away with the platter she had entered to remove.

Patty's tenant looked whimsically across the table at his small son.

"I think, Bill, the lady's managing us," he observed.

"Is her?" murmured Bill indifferently, reaching for his glass of milk. His father seemed pleased, so he saw no reason for worry.

Shortly after this conversation a mild attack of neuralgia afflicted Mrs. Murphy and gave Patty an excuse for calling at the cottage. After she had sympathized with the cook's affliction, the only evidence of which was a strip of red flannel bound tightly about her head, Miss Plough could not resist the temptation of taking a look around. Mrs. Murphy's immaculate

housekeeping revealed the cottage at its best, and Patty observed that the furniture was good and that her tenant possessed a very well selected, though small, library. She thought it wise, nevertheless, to caution Mrs. Murphy against his carelessness. To her surprise, the cook bridled.

"Is it that jool of a man you're referrin' to, miss?" she demanded, her hands on her ample hips. "Let me tell yez, there ain't a carefuller one, or a more dilicate. An' he's a mither to th' little felly, so he is!"

Miss Plough described the evidence of neglect she had discovered on her previous visit, but Mrs. Murphy sniffed.

"Sure, 'twas th' hussies that worked for him," she stoutly asserted. "Th' master's a gentleman, and acts like one." It was only too evident that the cook had gone over hopelessly to the enemy.

Patty herself a week later almost capitulated. Entering a crowded shop one morning she caught a glimpse in a distant aisle of a pair of broad shoulders and a well-carried head that looked familiar. A second glance informed her that it was her tenant, and with an amused, half-pitying smile she watched his courteous efforts to find an anchorage near a counter that displayed a glistening array of linen. Presently, drawn by the magnetism of her eyes, he turned his head sharply and looked at her across the sea of women that surged about him. She bowed, and immediately he began to make his way to her.

"Bill and I have been looking for an opportunity to thank you," he said, after they had shaken hands.

"Thank me for what?" demanded Patty.

"For rescuing us from savagery. You remember what the chap said about the inability of civilized man to live without a cook? Before the appearance of Mrs. Murphy, Bill and I were drifting toward cannibalism."

It is pleasant to be thanked by a good-looking man even if he happens to be nobody in particular, and Patty flushed with pleasure.

"You find Mrs. Murphy satisfactory, then?" she asked.

"Satisfactory! That's too feeble a





DRAWN BY EMILE NELSON

"Patty held out her hand, and he gravely extended his own."

word! It's love of her that brings me here. Had any one but that inestimable Hibernian said, 'Drop in at Hurley's and buy some table linen,' I should have an-

swered, 'Get thee behind me, Satan, and stay there.' But she speaks, and I obey. Tell me," he leaned toward Patty confidentially, "would it be considered un-



seemly were I to take firm hold of yonder counter while I explain my modest wishes to the blonde young person in charge. The ladies," plaintively, "push so!"

Patty laughed, but she felt that his light tone cloaked a very real helplessness and her ready sympathy was aroused.

"Can I be of any assistance?" she asked impulsively, and then shrank a little from the eager gratitude that shone in his face.

"If you will be so angelic," he answered fervently. "You can't imagine how much I stand in awe of the blonde young person."

On her way home that morning Patty took herself severely to task for her impulsiveness. "How very forward he must think me!" she sighed. But it was not in Miss Plough's nature to remain bad friends with herself for long, and in reflecting how admirably the pattern of the linen she had selected harmonized with the cottage, she regained her accustomed good opinion of herself.

Though she was living now in a whirl of luncheons and teas and dinners and dances, Patty found time for frequent visits to Mrs. Murphy. How much she had to do with the ordering of affairs at the cottage she did not realize herself until an embarrassing incident opened her eyes.

"Master Billy is home with a cold," Mrs. Murphy announced one afternoon when she ushered Miss Plough into the living room that was also the library. The invalid who had recently attained to the dignity of a kindergartner was royally installed in an arm chair, with a varied assortment of toys and picture books surrounding him. Patty held out her hand and he gravely extended his own dimpled member.

"I smoked a cig'et yesterday," he confided to her when Mrs. Murphy had departed on an errand to the kitchen.

"Oh, Billy!" murmured Patty, distressfully. She was exceedingly fond of children, and the evident loneliness of the brown-eyed little lad had long ago enlisted her interest. "It made you dreadfully sick, didn't it?" she asked hopefully.

"No, it didn't," responded Billy cheerfully. "I liked it."

"But think how badly your father would feel if he knew!" exclaimed his visitor.

The bright face clouded. "I must tell fader tonight," he said regretfully. And then, magnanimously, "If it makes him feel bad, I won't do it any more," he promised.

Patty stooped and kissed him. "That's right, Billy," she said encouragingly as she rose to go. The child stared at her intently.

"Mis' Murphy says you will marry fader. Do you think you will?" he asked wistfully.

Miss Plough, her face scarlet, murmured something unintelligible and took an abrupt leave of Billy and the cook. It was her own fault, she told herself fiercely, that she had become the subject of an ignorant woman's gossip. She had interfered to an unwarranted extent in the affairs of the cottage and deserved her punishment. Doubtless her tenant despised her. But Patty was not the person to suffer passively. The very next morning she whirled into the office of Mr. Bannerman and ordered that bewildered young man to find a purchaser for her house at once. Then she told him graciously that she would be at home that evening if he cared to call, and beamed on him to such an extent that the love which had been smoldering in his breast flared up brightly, and for the rest of the day he had the feeling that he was treading on air.

A week later he telephoned Patty that he had found a purchaser for her property, and begged her to be at his office the next morning at eleven to discuss the details of the sale. Miss Plough hung up the receiver sadly. She was dining out that night, but though her frock was new and unusually becoming, it did not dissipate the melancholy that weighed upon her spirits. She told herself it was grief at parting with her beloved cottage, but in her heart she knew that the house was so closely associated with the tenant that she couldn't separate the two.

"I've the nicest new man to take you in," Mrs. Denver, her hostess, whispered to her when she entered the drawing room, and the next minute Patty found herself gazing into the humorous eyes of her tenant. Evening dress became him, and as she dropped breathlessly into the chair

he pulled out for her at the table she realized, even in her confusion, that he was the most personable man in the room.

"Do you know, you looked positively alarmed when you saw me," he observed to her when the conversation ceased to be general. "Were you afraid I would bungle with the forks?"

"I think you are very well able to take care of yourself," she answered, shortly.

"You are mistaken there," he hastened to assure her. "You, dear lady landlord, of all people should know that in many things I have shown myself grossly incompetent. Have you forgotten the plate rail?"

An angry flush rose to Patty's cheeks. If he had an atom of respect for her he would not dare make fun of her like this, she told herself.

"After tomorrow I will no longer be your landlord," she informed him, icily.

"That is very bad news for Bill and me," he observed gravely. "We have the greatest affection—for our present landlord. May one ask—"

But Patty had turned rudely from him to chat with the man on her left.

In the drawing room Mrs. Denver sought her eagerly. "I was so surprised to find you knew John Loring," she said. "He's a college chum of Sam's, you know, and ever since he and Billy came here to live we've been trying to get him for one of our dinners." She paused and glanced keenly at Patty as if struck with some new idea. "Why, how stupid I am!" she exclaimed. "I remember now that it was not until I mentioned you were to be here tonight that he accepted."

"You must be mistaken," Patty assured her coldly. "I know Mr. Loring in a business way merely. He occupies a house I own."

"How romantic," gushed her hostess. "I fancy he's led a lonely life these last four years. You know his wife died shortly after Billy was born. She was a Jane Stanton, and everybody knows she married him out of pique because the man she loved—"

Fortunately for Patty, whose cheeks were burning, the men guests entered just then and Mrs. Denver's flow of gossip was interrupted. Miss Plough avoided further

conversation with either her hostess or her tenant by taking an early leave.

When she entered his office the next morning young Mr. Bannerman greeted her with the air of one conscious of having merited approval.

"Loring is a little late," he said, after they had shaken hands. "But I expect—Ah, here he is now!" She turned, and a feeling of helpless indignation took possession of her as she realized who the prospective purchaser was. Obeying a sudden impulse, she rose, and, ignoring Loring's proffered hand, stared coldly at Mr. Bannerman. "I've changed my mind about selling the cottage," she announced abruptly, and with a curt, "Good morning," walked out of the office.

As she lingered in the entrance of the building to put in place a refractory lock of hair, a voice at her elbow murmured ingratiatingly: "It's a delightful morning for a walk, and one gets a beautiful view of the river from the South Grant street bridge."

Patty did not deign to turn her head. "If you think you can persuade me into selling the cottage, you might as well give up the idea at once," she said crossly.

She started briskly up the street, and her tenant, encouraged by the fact that she took the direction of the South Grant street bridge, kept close beside her.

"I do not object to your keeping the cottage," he observed presently, smiling down at the averted face. "My fear was that a stranger might obtain possession of it."

Patty vouchsafed him a fleeting look. "What interest can you have in the cottage?" she demanded snubbingly.

"I have two reasons for being deeply interested in it," he retorted. "'First and formist,' as our esteemed friend, Mrs. Murphy would say, I designed it."

"You!" exclaimed Patty, stopping still in her astonishment. They had reached the bridge, and her tenant paused beside her and, leaning his elbows on the iron railing, looked down at the swollen water.

"Once upon a time," he began, "there was a young man who started out in life with a preposterous fund of enthusiasm. He had a little talent and a great deal of ambition and the bent of both was the



DRAWN BY EMILE NELSON

"They had reached the bridge, and her tenant paused beside her."

designing of beautiful houses for people to live in. One day, in the very beginning of his career, he chanced upon an offer made by one of the magazines for the design of a cottage, and he sat down and sketched a plan that was his own dream of a home—love was to glorify it, you know—and sent it. Almost immediately afterwards he began to experience real life and to build real houses, and a stern practicality soon replaced all of his roseate enthusiasm. His cottage did not take a prize, and in less than a year he had forgotten all about the design.

"Then one day came a letter from the editor saying that he had come across the plan and asking permission to use it. He answered 'yes,' and once more forgot all about it. Professionally he prospered, but because he had expected so much of life in the beginning, I suppose, his success

never satisfied him. A few months ago, obeying a call that meant advancement, he came, a stranger, to a strange city, and in looking about for a home for himself and his son, he found his cottage. Obeying a sudden impulse, he rented it, for he felt that it would be a piquant experience to dwell for awhile with the ghost of a lost illusion. But he found that the longer he lived in the cottage, the less like a ghost, the less like an illusion, even, did the dream of his youth seem. And so he came to love it, and now it would pain him very much to give it up."

He turned to look at Patty, but she was gazing at the black water that flowed beneath them.

"You said there was another reason for your interest," she said softly. "Will you tell me that, too?"

"I love my landlord," he answered as

softly. "It is she, indeed, more than the cottage, who has made the dreams of youth seem possible. Are Bill and I to be—ejected?"

"You have a lease," she replied, with an effort at lightness.

He took a folded paper from his pocket and handed it to her.

"You asked for it once," he said. "It

is yours to do with as you will."

She began tearing the document into little pieces, and when the last one had fluttered like a belated snowflake down to the river, she turned to him with shining eyes.

"If you have me, you will not need a lease," she whispered, with a tremulous smile.

## O'Tunder's Peace Conference

BY WILBUR D. NESBIT

Much as he loved a fight, for at heart Owen O'Tunder was a Donnybrookite, the soft-spoken, hot-headed little Irishman greatly deprecated the long drawn out neighborhood quarrel which had matured into a feud between the Smith's and the Biltman's.

"A Dutchman's mad shpell," O'Tunder observed to his wife, "is like a bog fire. It starts slow, an' you t'ink it means nawthin', an' it keeps a growin' an' a growin', sputterin' wance in a while whin th' wind tells it it should be in betther business, until finally all th' wather in th' ocean cudn't put it out. An' shtill it niver gets to be a rearin', tearin', bang-slatherin' blaze."

"An' th' Irish," said Mrs. O'Tunder, "is like a stick o' dynamite whin they gits mad. 'Tis 'Luk out, there!' whang! boom! An' that's all."

"It's all, Honora, wumman. But take it by an' large, an' in gineral, whin an Irishman gits mad, 'tis a good an' plinty."

Honora O'Tunder chuckled comfortably. Had she not seen this mild little Owen O'Tunder, with the voice of a cooing dove and the eyes of a child, at times when his suddenly boiled wrath reached the "whang, boom!" stage?

"'Tis none o' your fight, Owen man," she reminded him.

"'Tis not that that thrubbles me. The worry is that there's no fight at all, at all. If wan or the other o' thim was Irish th' fight wud ha' been over an' done wit' an' ten more shtarted long befoor this. There's Smith sayin' what th'

la-aw says Biltman can't do, an' Biltman sayin' what he says Smith can't do, an' both o' thim gettin' sympathy an' incouragement fr'm th'r friends, an' th' whole sthreet ta-akin' sides wit' thim, till it's all a man wit' th' love o' a fight in him can do t' keep fr'm gettin' mad at th' two o' thim an' shpeakin' his piece."

"Owen, if there's wan thing ye do, do this. Keep out o' th' fuss."

Owen O'Tunder carefully tamped the tobacco down into the bowl of his pipe, started it going, and blew out a wisp of smoke.

"'Tis no fight o' mine," he said finally.

"'Tis no fight o' mine, an' 'tis no fight f'r me. But, if I was Biltman, or if I was Smith—"

In the lively fancy of what would happen were he either of the parties to the feud, Owen O'Tunder's speech failed him. He could only smoke vigorously, in quick, snappy puffs, while his black eyes sparkled and his cheeks wrinkled with the smile of a fighting man.

The Smith-Biltman feud was now a year old, and large for its age. Originally it began when Mrs. Smith, who had a sick headache that day and could not be expected to be truly happy in disposition under such a circumstance, had objected to Mrs. Biltman's using the Smith apple tree as a terminal station for her clothes line. The Smith apple tree grew beside the fence between the lots and a big bough leaned invitingly over the fence. From that bough in



other years the Biltman children had plucked apples freely. From that bough in the spring they had broken twigs heavy with blossoms, and the Smith and Biltman progeny might be said to have been raised under the shade of that tree. There they made their mud pies; there they had their play houses; there had Lottie Biltman taken her dollies to visit the toy horses in the toy stable of Henry Smith, when Henry was a wee boy and had been affectionately called "Hal." Beneath that bough had Mrs. Smith leaned over the fence and told Mrs. Biltman what she did for Henry when he had the croup, in exchange for Mrs. Biltman's confidences along the line of remedies for colic and hives. Why, until six months ago, there was a gap in the fence where five pickets had been torn away by Henry Smith that he might have freer access to the Biltman yard, and that Lottie Biltman might come over into his yard without tearing her frocks by climbing the fence!

And now, not only were the pickets replaced, but there was no bough on the apple tree where the limb formerly hung into the atmosphere above the yard of the Biltman's. No sooner did Ludwig Biltman replace those pickets than George Smith walked out in his shirt sleeves and with a saw severed the bough.

"It wasn't so much trouble over the clothes line," Mrs. Smith had said, "as it was other things. That was only the starting point or the finishing touch. After the way Mrs. Biltman acted that day I began to see her in another light."

"I did not care for der apple tree," declared Mrs. Biltman, talking her troubles over with another neighbor. "No. Mrs. Smit' coul't haf der apple tree golt plated an' hung in der parlor for all I cared. But der vay she actet! Nod only apoud der apple tree, pud apoud efer-ting else. Ach! Such a vomans!"

And Smith and Biltman, who at first were inclined to remain friends and to think that the cloud of warfare above the heads of their wives would blow away, eventually assimilated the spirit of their spouses, and then the feud had its full growth. For women may be enemies today, and may kiss and cry and make it

up tomorrow; but let two men convince themselves that they are at outs and the relative positions of the pole star and the southern cross are as nothing to the elbow room they will want to give each other socially. So, here were half the folk on the street siding with the Biltman's and half of them taking the part of the Smith's, with the exception of the O'Tunder's, whose home faced that of the Biltman's, and of the Rotzens, whose house adjoined the O'Tunder's. Jacob Rotzen, brew-master of the Imperial Brewery, was a man of content, and he mingled not in strife either wordy or otherwise; while Owen O'Tunder's notion of a fight was a short, sharp, and bloody contest, with the policeman blindfolded and the—but that was all in the long ago. Now he was for quiet, but not for ominous quiet.

Sunday afternoon he sat at his parlor window, smoking his beloved pipe with the stubby stem, and looking out upon the world with the bovine placidity of a man whose wife is a good cook and who has eaten a dinner that has warmed the cockles of his heart. For such a man there should be no gloom in the world. For such a man the roses bloom in the snow and the birds twitter on the bare branches of the winter-stripped trees.

From the Smith home emerged Mr. and Mrs. George Smith, and their two smaller children. Every Sunday afternoon they took a stately promenade down town as far as the library building and then back home through the park. Henry, who was a young man now, having cast his first vote at the fall election, was not with them. From the Biltman home came Mr. and Mrs. Ludwig Biltman, and Arnold, and Gracie, and Bismarck Biltman. It was a Sunday custom of the Biltman's to walk down town through the park as far as the library, thence home, reversing the orbit of the Smith's. Once, indeed, both families had gone over the same route, but the feud had caused the Biltman's to change their way. In those days Lottie Biltman and Henry Smith had accompanied their parents; Lottie, sweet in her Sunday finery and Henry, uncomfortably dignified in his "church" clothing. Today Lottie was



not of the procession. The two families passed each other without speaking, albeit the children did turn and make some half-way faces at each other before they were caught and dissuaded therefrom by their parents.

"But they let the kids make wan or two faces," smiled O'Tunder, from the concealment of his window curtains, "an' if it hadn't been Sunday they might 'a' yelled wan or two na-ames at each other befor they was shtopped."

The opposing armies moved in state in different directions and shortly turned their respective corners. Then from the home of the Smith's came Henry. On the steps he hesitated, turned, and looked this way and that, finally permitting himself to gaze for a long moment at the windows of the Biltman home.

"She's back o' wan o' thim windys," O'Tunder whispered to himself. "An' she knew Henry wud be comin' out to look over an' see if he cud see her, and Henry knows she is lookin' out at him this blissid minyute. But she won't let him see her. Glory be! I see me way."

The balance of the afternoon Owen O'Tunder rocked, and read, and chuckled to himself until Honora demanded the cause of his merriment.

"They do be prentin' funny t'ings in th' Sunday pa-apers these days," he told her.

She took the paper from his hands and found that for an hour he had been studying a page of classified advertisements.

"Call that funny?" she asked him. "Owen, man, 'tis some divilment in yer head. What is it?"

"'Tis no divilment, Honora. An' 'tis nawthin' to be told to ye this da-ay."

And this marvel among wives was content with this reply, for well she knew her husband, and well she knew that she would have full knowledge of his "divilment" when the proper time came. Yet it was hard for her to refrain from asking more questions when she heard him chuckling to himself late in the night, at a time when she thought he should have been asleep.

It was blocks away from home that

Owen O'Tunder saw Henry Smith the next day. Oh, he might very well have spoken to him on Sunday afternoon, for Henry's promenade did not extend far from his home street, and mostly he walked up and down before the Biltman residence. But Owen O'Tunder was first of all a diplomat, and the best part of diplomacy is keeping your family and friends from knowing of your intended coups until the instant when they may be divulged with the greatest effect. O'Tunder walked into the store where Henry kept books, and made his way to the young man's desk.

"Good morning, Mr. O'Tunder," said Henry, dropping his pen and reaching out his hand.

"Good mar-rnin', Hinnery! Sure, 'tis fine to see ye, bendin' yerself to th' task of upliftin' th' commercial worruld, now, isn't it?"

Henry laughed. He knew O'Tunder's teasing speech since he was a small boy.

"But," O'Tunder went on, "they do be wor-rkin' ye too har-rd, lad. Sure, yer eyes are like two dots on a quilt. Was ye up late lasht night, poshtin' th' buks?"

"Last night was Sunday night, Mr. O'Tunder."

"Ah, so it was! Thin 'tis some gurrul was kapin' ye f'm yer comfytebble bed. Ah, Hinnery, go it while ye're young, but don't go it too hard, for ye'll have to be old a good many years, an' wan Sunday night isn't th' only wan."

"I wasn't out to see a girl last night, Mr. O'Tunder."

"No? Why, Hinnery, at yer age I was dancin' all night an' wor-rkin' all day, an' ma-akin' love even to the washin's on th' lines."

Henry smiled soberly.

"Ye've changed, Hinnery. Seems to me ye used to spind Sunday aftnoons an' evenin's over to Biltman's pretty reggy-lar."

"But, you know, Mr. O'Tunder, that there has been a quarrel between my folks and the Biltmans."

"Wirra, now, if I hadn't clean forgot it! Sure, I t'ought 'twas all med up an' forgot this long time. Ye don't mean to say 'tis still goin' on?"

"It is," Henry sighed.

"An' th' little gurrul—Lottie is her name, isn't it?"

Henry's eyes brightened, then the light faded in them and he nodded.

"Well, well, well!" O'Tunder pursed his lips and whistled softly. "An' she has th' pinkest cheeks an' th' brightest eyes! But come to think of it, she luks tired these days. Is she mad at ye, too, Hinnery?"

"I don't know. I can't find out."

"Hinnery, come here. I want to talk t' ye five minyutes."

O'Tunder led Henry to a secluded corner of the store, and then and there did outline a plot whereat Henry shook his head at first, but came to listen calmly later, and at last grasped the hand of O'Tunder and shook it vigorously. Then they walked back to his desk, O'Tunder saying in cautious tones:

"Now, mind ye, not a wurrud till I say, 'Go!' Thin, Hinnery it will be up to ye."

Henry promised, and took up his pen with a new smile on his face, and a song murmuring on his lips.

"'Tis a fine broth of a boy, that Smith la-ad ye do be havin' kapin' yer buks," O'Tunder remarked to Henry's employer. "'Tis a lad fer me own hear-rt, an' if ye're half the business man ye're said to be, ye'll do right by him."

"Henry is in line for promotion, all right," the employer replied, reflecting the genial smile of O'Tunder as the latter left.

It may have been accident, but the chances are it was design that led O'Tunder to the street where he thought he might meet Lottie—we should say Charlotte—Biltman on a shopping trip.

"'Tis a Monday bargain ye're after gettin', Lottie?" asked O'Tunder, overtaking her when she turned the corner and started out the avenue for home.

"Oh, Mr. O'Tunder! Is it you? I would not have expected to see you down here among all these women."

"On me way home," explained O'Tunder, "an' I t'ought it might be worth me while to shtep by th' windys an' see what ttemptation it is that leads my folks

to shpend all th' money they can find out I have."

Lottie laughed, and O'Tunder laughed.

"Mrs. O'Tunder isn't down street to-day, is she?"

"No. She wa-anted to come down an' buy me a foine shmokin' jacket f'r four dollars an' twinty-two cints, ma-arked down fr'm six dollars, but I told her if she iver did anny'ting that wud mek me shtop shmokin' in me shirt sleeves, that day wud ind all."

"Oh, Mr. O'Tunder, you are such a joker! Now, if Mrs. O'Tunder got you a smoking jacket made of—made of orange silk, and said you had to wear it, you would—"

"I wud! Right f'r ye, Lottie. A wumman that knows men in ginerall an' wan man in particular can mek himself an' herself happy be bossin' him around just enough to kape him properly tamed."

They walked on, side by side, and O'Tunder wondered how he was going to create the opportunity to say what he wished to say.

"I saw Hinnery this aftynoon," at last he remarked.

"Henry?" Lottie asked, with a conscious look, "Henry who?"

"Hinnery Smith. I was down to th' place he worruks, on business. Th' lad do be lukkin' bad."

"Looking bad?"

"Yis."

"I haven't noticed him for a good while. I thought he was in good health." This with a fine air of unconcern.

"His eyes are gettin' too fur back in his head, an' his face is gettin' too thin. That b'y is either overwurrucked or over-worried."

Lottie continued to say nothing, but her cheeks were very red now. O'Tunder saw the blush from the corner of his eye and he smiled internally.

"Lottie," asked O'Tunder, determined to get an expression of one sort or another from her, "did ye fall out wit' Hinnery whin yer folks fell out wit' his folks?"

"We—he—my mama and his—" she stammered confusedly.

"Say no more, lassie," O'Tunder urged, with that bubbling kindness of tone that

was his when his heart grew big and his thoughts sped swiftly. "Say no more. I undystand as well as if ye had writ me a buk about it."

"You do? And does—does—"

"Does Hinnery?"

She nodded, not trusting herself to answer.

"Hinnery does know, an' Hinnery does care. I've—I'm an older man than Hinnery—Hiven knows if I wasn't 'tis not f'r him I'd be talkin'."

"You're the best man that ever lived, Mr. O'Tunder," she declared warmly. "Everybody says so."

"But everybody thinks I meddle wit' nobody's business."

"This isn't business—it's—"

"It is, an' it's worse nor business to meddle wit'."

"But you are not meddling now, Mr. O'Tunder. You are advising. Do you think you could get my folks to make up with the Smiths?"

"It isn't your folks nor Hinnery's folks that I am carin' so much about, Lottie. It's you and Hinnery."

"But if the quarrel was settled, then—"

"Let thim ind their own quarrels. I will not meddle wit' that."

"Then Henry and I—" There were tears in her voice.

"Lottie, can you kape a secret?"

"I think so. What is it?"

"It isn't a secret yet, but I've got a plan that will make you an' Hinnery happy, an' that ought to settle the fuss wit' your folks an' his, an' —"

"O, I knew you would know how to go about it!"

"I'm not goin' about it, though. 'Tis you an' Hinnery must go about it."

"But they won't let us speak or see each other, or let him come to our house, or—"

"Thin ye'll come to mine."

"I wouldn't want to do that way, Mr. O'Tunder. I wouldn't do anything I'd be ashamed to tell my mother."

"Ye won't have to do annyting your mother won't approve whin she knows it. Now, let me begin plottin'."

And for the next five blocks O'Tunder talked earnestly, persuasively, and argumentatively, while Lottie by turns ob-

jected and agreed, and at last consented to fall in with his plans.

"Only," she said, "it depends on Henry."

"Hinnery? You know him! And so do I."

"And you'll see—"

"I have seen him, I tell ye, an' he said f'r me to see you. Now, 'tis Winsday night. Don't forget."

Charlotte Biltman said she wouldn't, and then they were at their own street, and O'Tunder smiled when he heard her humming to herself as she hurried up the steps of her home.

"She'll not forget," he told himself. "An' I've cut a hard job out f'r meself."

Tuesday he dropped in again to see Henry and there was much talk between them, which ended by Henry's wringing his hand and slapping him on the shoulder and telling him he was a jewel.

"They'll be some comp'ny this evening," O'Tunder told his wife while they were eating supper Wednesday.

"Comp'ny? I knew nawthin' about it."

"I mint to tell ye, but it shlipped me mind. I asked a frind or two to come in an' see us, nebborly like."

"Who?"

"Th' Biltman's an' wan or two others."

"An' glad I'll be to see thim, if they don't thry to talk about their fuss wit' th' Smith's."

"Mebbe they'll get tired talkin' o' that wan o' these times," Owen remarked, going upstairs to shave and struggle into a boiled shirt. He had found a collar button and was berating the man that invented collars when his wife came speedily to him and whispered:

"Owen, man. There's the divil an' all to pay!"

"Pay him, thin! Mebbe he wants pa-ay f'r this collar."

"No, no. Listhen. Th' Smith's is here."

"Th' Smith's?"

"Yis. An' ye said th' Biltman's was to come."

"Now, isn't that the way things happen? I can't find me collar button, th' collar won't fasthen whin I do find it, an' now

th' Smith's comes whin the Biltman's is invited."

"What'll we do, Owen?"

"Do? 'Tis not us that's to do anny-t'ing. Th' question is what will they do?"

Downstairs the Smith's sat in the parlor, waiting for Mr. O'Tunder to come down, when the bell rang.

"'Tis the Biltman's, I know," whispered Mrs. O'Tunder. "Wirra, wirra! What's to do, I dunno."

O'Tunder walked to the head of the stairs and called:

"Missus Smith, wud ye be so kind as to open th' front dure an' let those folks in? Th' madam can't come down this minyute."

He turned and saw his wife staring at him with a horrified expression.

"There'll be murdher done here this night," she whispered.

O'Tunder laid a warning finger on his lips, and they listened while Mrs. Smith opened the door.

Then: "Id's a nice efening, but—Ach, himmel! You?"

Then the sound of footsteps that stalked majestically into the parlor. The Biltman's had arrived. O'Tunder sat on his bed and doubled over with mirth. Honora came to him, shook him by the shoulder, and was about to speak.

"Whish—sh—sht!" he managed to hiss. "Say nawthin'. Do nawthin'."

From their vantage point upstairs they could imagine the glares with which the foes below were regarding each other. They could fancy the icy looks, the wrathful unconcern with which Mrs. Biltman and Mrs. Smith smoothed their skirts and kept to opposite sides of the room, the embarrassing dignity with which Smith and Biltman looked at the ceiling. Then the storm broke. Mrs. Smith began talking. Mrs. Biltman caught up the argument. Smith and Biltman interjected occasional admonishments to their wives to be quiet. But the two women, each with a whole year's talk dammed up in her system, could not be stilled. Side by side their speech raced, like two automobiles that charged resistlessly along an open avenue. Recriminations, accusations, upbraidings, indictments flew to and fro between them,

were caught on the fly and hurled back on the rebound. For full ten minutes the debate endured at white heat and it was yet at top pitch when Mrs. O'Tunder started for the stairs. O'Tunder caught her, gripped her about the waist and hung to her.

"Not a shtep do ye go!" he said in her ear.

"I will! I will!" she cried, but her voice was not strong enough to pierce through the sounds that surged up from the parlor.

"Ye will not."

"They'll be hair pullin' next. 'Tis disgraceful. I'll not have it in me house!"

"'Tis my doin's, Honora, wumman. I'll take all th' blame, if blame there is, but f'r th' love o' hivvin kape out o' it. Lave 'em talk. 'Tis talkin' they need to be doin'. Wance they say all they have been itchin' to say 'twill be all over."

By degrees the wordy battle died away. It dwindled to an exchange of "You did!" and "It isn't so!" and "I knew it all the time!" and "So there!" and the like.

"Now," said O'Tunder, turning to his wondering wife, "we'll go down."

"Gud evenin', Misther Smit'," he said, walking into the parlor. "Gud evenin', Misther Biltman. An' ladies, gud evenin' to ye."

Smith and wife sat against one wall, the Biltman's against the other. Mrs. Smith was in tears, Mrs. Biltman likewise. Smith and Biltman looked as men might be expected to look at such a time.

"Ye know Mr. and Mrs. Biltman, don't ye, Mr. and Mrs. Smith?" asked O'Tunder, suavely, while Honora busied herself arranging a table cover.

"You know very well we do," came from Mrs. Smith, "and if you did this intentionally, if you asked us here when you had asked them, and you knowing all the time that we never speak to them—"

"But I t'ought I hear-rd ye speakin' to them," O'Tunder interrupted, smiling.

"Owen O'Tunder!" from his wife. "Owen O'Tunder, is this your doin'?"

"Wan moment, my frinds," begged O'Tunder, feeling the fire of his wife's eyes. "Wan moment. Ye must be



frinds fr'm now hinceforth. Ye must forget clothes lines an' apple trees an' finces an' all that."

They looked at him blankly.

"I t'ink I hear the reason comin' now," he continued. Steps came up the porch, and some one rang the bell. "Yis," O'Tunder said, "here is the biggest reason in th' wuruld."

He opened the door, and Charlotte, in her prettiest white dress, carrying a bunch of velvety white roses, entered, smiling.

"Lottie!" exclaimed Mrs. Biltman. I thought you set you hat a het ache ant wouldn't come out yet."

"No," answered Henry Smith, in his Sunday suit, with a white rosebud in his coat lapel, coming in and closing the door, and gripping the hand of O'Tunder. "No, Mrs. Biltman, she told you her head had been buzzing all day."

"Yess. Ant—" her Mrs. Biltman realized that she was holding a conversation with a Smith. Her face changed.

"Lottie Biltman," she demanded, "vare haf you—"

"Lottie Smith, if you please," said Henry. "We were married half an hour ago."

"Come now, Honora, wumman," said O'Tunder, taking his wife by the arm and leading her out of the room. "Come beyant to th' kitchen f'r a moment."

He led her to the back porch and indicated a number of packages, a bucket of ice cream, and a box of cigars, and sundry bottles. Honora was too greatly dumbfounded to ask questions.

"Th' weddin' supper," he explained.

"Then you?"

"I did. I did it all! An' I'm dommed proud o' me wurruk!"

"Owen, ye're th' biggest divil an' th' best man that ever lived."

"So Lottie says—th' lash t part of it."

Mrs. O'Tunder soon spread the table. O'Tunder got the things unpacked, and soon there was an array of cold meats, pickles ("Pickles," Owen chuckled, "is a sign of throe love") sandwiches, uncorked bottles, and in the kitchen the ice cream and cake waited their turn. Then Owen O'Tunder threw open the doors of the dining room and there were Henry, his father and Biltman on the sofa, Henry looking sheepishly happy, and his father and father-in-law looking glad and proud. The three women, Mrs. Smith, her daughter-in-law, and Mrs. Biltman, were sitting on two chairs with their arms about each other. Tears and smiles were on their faces.

They arose and rushed at him, he beating them off in mock fright. Finally he led them to the table.

Later he arose, with a glass in his hand, and proposed:

"To peace, an' th' bride an' groom."

"Vat I don'd see, O'Dunder," said Biltman, "is vare you gome in on dis. Ve all get our rewarths from it, but you ged noddings."

"I belave," O'Tunder beamed, "that 'tis th' juty o' th' bist ma—an to kiss th' bride."

But the bride kissed him.

## Hiram Tanker's Third Personality

BY HUGH PENDEXTER

A woman rarely retained Ezra Stackpole Butterworth as her attorney. The unusual methods of the Bureau of Abnormal Litigation had, I know from several years' observation, a strong interest for female litigants, but the chief distasted their patronage because he shrewdly realized the very oddity of his moves left him open

to reproach and fault-finding should he lose. In all the several years I was his first assistant counselor at eccentric law, I can not remember of our representing in open court more than half a dozen women.

So, I shrugged my shoulders at Jethuel, the tall, thin, gloomy-faced clerk, in





DRAWN BY WALTER J. ENRIGHT

"Can a person two-thirds crazy, make a will that will hold?"

anticipation of a curt refusal and a polite reference to Smith, Durgin, & Blank, around the corner, when Miss Tanker paid her initial visit. But her first words struck his fancy, I believe.

"Lawyer Butterworth," she panted, for the stairway was rather steep and narrow, and she had already seen the noon of life, "can a person, two-thirds crazy, make a will that will hold? And, if so, have I got to prove he made the will with the sane chunk of his mind?"

"Madam," he replied, bowing gallantly over his old-fashioned, spindle-legged desk, "the courts have not, I regret, yet reduced to anything akin to exactness the question as to just what modicum of rationality a man must possess in order to execute a binding instrument. You are experiencing trouble with the will—"

"I'm his cousin — Hiram Tanker's cousin, and two other cousins are trying to cheat me out of the little property he left to me in the will that they say doesn't amount to anything," she interrupted, shaking her bonnet until the tall sprays of beads trembled violently.

"They contest your cousin's will on the usual grounds, eh? I see. Now, if you will take your case to—" he began, when she stopped him by rapping his desk smartly with her umbrella, and as he gently brushed the mahogany with his handkerchief, she declared:

"No, I stop here. I've taken the case to a dozen different people, and just because I couldn't pay in advance what they thought they ought to have, no one would have anything to do with it. The last lawyer said I'd better come here, as you were just crazy enough to bother with it. There, now! I've said something that sounds homely."

But Mr. Butterworth threw back his head and laughed silently. "Doubtless all my brother said is true. Who was it? Oh, Bilker, eh? I believe he owes me for several jolts. But seriously, madam, I seldom touch a case on a contingent fee. And unless the issues involved are in some way out of the ordinary, I do not care to touch it at any price. I have here before me, awaiting my most urgent attention, the papers in a bankruptcy proceeding

against a man who incorporated himself into a 'Good Cheer Agency,' purposing to furnish cheery, optimistic letters of a semi-news nature to persons away from town on their vacations. A weekly budget of welcome items about town life, something bright and wholesome to make them think kindly of the city and incline them to return in the fall, gladly. A stupid office boy mixed the addresses so the married men received the single men's epistles, spinsters received the chatty nothings intended for several Casino girls, and so on, every customer receiving just what he would not have if it had not been for the blunder. Consequently all his patrons deserted him, and I must work overtime to rescue him from an undesirable position. I tell you all this that you may at least faintly appreciate how my time is taken up with untangling the eccentric skeins, and how it is impossible for me to handle any simple problems of life. Now, Smith—"

"Drat Smith, Durgin, & Blank, if you have them in mind," she cried, arranging her worn-looking wraps preparatory to departing. "I guess I don't look prosperous—"

"Madam!" exploded the chief's gentle voice in protest. "You embarrass me. It is not a question of purse, but pride. I have never yet taken up a conventional issue."

"Well, Hiram Tanker was doubly crazy," she cried, "and usually wore his hat at the table when serving the boarders in my cousin's boarding house. I should say that was odd enough to begin with, if that's what you want."

Mr. Butterworth laid aside his pen and looked a trifle interested. "It sounds promising—for the other side," he murmured. "Be careful; if the contestants can prove he was crazy the will, probably, will be declared void. If you are convinced he was doubly insane, I should say that puts an end to your hopes."

"No," she retorted firmly, pursing up her thin lips with grim determination, "he was mildly insane for years, believing first one thing and then another. But through it all ran a rational streak, narrow, I'll admit, yet broad enough to write a will on."

"Ah, you hold my attention. Only, it will require something tangible to impress the surrogate with your belief. However, give me the facts," he invited, picking up his pencil.

She readily began a lengthy recital, which was punctuated with the unusual, and I could see he was much taken with the situation. "I will waive the retainer fee and take the case," he decided, after she had finished. "Leave your papers and I will consult with the other side."

Our client's name was Lydia Tanker, cousin of the testator, Hiram Tanker. The contestants were Mr. and Mrs. Roger Sumley. They conducted an apartment house and served dinner for nearly a score of their tenants. The testator had lived with them for years, paying a small sum for his keep, and always making himself useful about the house, especially at dinner time, when he presided at the head of the table and carved and passed the plates.

So far as I could see, the proponent's case was already lost. The mere fact that the testator had insisted through all the years in invariably wearing some kind of a head covering at the table was enough to convince the average court of his deep-seated incompetency. Then, there were many other little idiosyncrasies that tended to strengthen my belief he was unfit to execute a will.

"I can't anticipate," I mumbled, "how you are going to dodge the hat and other facts. No use trying to contradict those bits of evidence."

"My boy, I don't intend to," smiled Mr. Butterworth. "I shall insist on every bit of evidence that goes to establish his eccentricities. For, as our client observed, the only course to pursue is to have him proven insane, subject to all these hallucinations, and yet at all times displaying a rational partiality toward her. A person may act and think in an abnormal manner and yet retain enough lucidity of purpose to know whom he wishes to name as his beneficiary. Even a clouded intellect retains the right to have some predilection when it comes to disposing of property."

On the next day we were informed that Horatio Bilker had become identified with the other side, and my chief seemed hugely pleased over the information. It sur-

prised me a bit, however, that he should direct that the matter be hurried to its first hearing without any delay, and despite the fact we had procured no witnesses to sustain our contentions.

"Jethuel has ascertained what witnesses the contestants will call, and I am satisfied they desire to be fair and impartial; and it's better to prove our case by them than by others," explained Mr. Butterworth.

And thus it resulted that on the adjourned day we had the novel experience of attending court in the hope of winning the decision on the opponent's evidence alone. If it were only a hope with me, it was a firm expectation with Mr. Butterworth; and his quaint bearing of lively satisfaction caused Mr. Bilker and Mr. Friesman to hold a whispered conference.

When the clerk called the calendar Mr. Butterworth offered the will for probate and then calmly waited for Messrs. Bilker and Friesman to interpose their objections.

Mr. Friesman did so, and then quickly observing we had no witnesses, added, "We are anxious to submit our proofs at this time."

"The proponent is as eager and ready," softly informed Mr. Butterworth, smiling mildly on his pompous brother.

Opposing counsel then outlined the nature of the evidence to the surrogate, a tall, smug-faced man, whose ears stood out abnormally, as if forever on the *qui vive* to drink in the law.

"If the court please," said Mr. Friesman, eyeing us with complacent pity, "our witnesses will show that for the last ten years Hiram Tanker was hopelessly insane. We will show him in a dual personality, and we shall claim that in either he was incompetent to execute this instrument, which by its terms robs his benefactors of their just due by diverting the entire estate to the proponent. We shall picture him wearing a skull cap at the dinner table on one day and shifting to a wide-brimmed hat on another day. The boarders in that household will take the stand and explain that they realized he was incurably insane, and that out of consideration for my client's tender feelings they did not remove their patronage be-

cause of his — ah — er — peculiar table manners.

"It will shortly become apparent to your honor that Hiram Tanker lived in the past. At times he was invested with the spirit of the days when he was a pains-taking clerk in a drug store. It was then he wore the skull cap at the table and that his blindly groping, befuddled, and darkened intellect gave a faint reflex of the olden times as he mechanically performed his little services. At other times his mind dwelt on that period of his life when, as a dusty and jovial miller in wide-brimmed hat he filled the waiting farmer's order with hearty zest and abundant measure. And on these days his apportionment of the viands revealed the impress of his early calling. As a druggist, he was accustomed, if I may use the term, to stint his customers, and I will confess my clients suffered bitterly from the complaints of their boarders on these unwelcome occasions. As the miller, it was his inclination to give too generous a measure, and the first served fared best.

"And it will all go to prove that the sane Hiram Tanker died many years ago. So far as his testamentary capacity was concerned, he passed away ten years before his physical body was consigned to the grave." And counsel's voice was hushed and tinged with sorrow.

Then he continued: "To explain why the boarders endured the uncertainty of his addled whims, I should add he was satisfied in either of his cloudy, reminiscent moods with serving only the person seated at his immediate left in his two-fold, undesirable manner. As the diners occasionally shifted their seats their inconvenience was not so great after all; but each will swear the head covering was worn from soup to dessert. From all these circumstances we shall insist that Hiram Tanker, in his dual delusions, each factor of which was the disordered creation of a worn-out brain, retained no glimmering of reason which would warrant this court in adjudicating that that false, and as I believe, fraudulently obtained paper, to be a valid will. Mr. Brurr, take the stand."

Mr. Brurr was a sour, dissatisfied looking man with an uncomfortable steel



DRAWN BY WALTER J. ENRIGHT

"He would carefully spoon out a modicum of mashed potato."

watch chain gracing a feeble waist line. He scowled at the stenographer and sniffed sarcastically before answering each query. Yes, he had boarded at the Sumley's. He should say he had (sniff). He not only knew the testator in his lifetime, but he feared he could never

forget him (with this, a decided sniff).

"You knew him best when he labored under what delusion?" suggested Mr. Friesman, archly.

"When he thought he was a druggist," replied the witness gloomily. "That's why I had to leave there."



"Ah, ha! 'Had to leave,' eh?" repeated Mr. Bilker loudly, approaching and leaning over the rail. "Did the stenographer get that?—'had to leave.'"

"Couldn't stand it, although I've stood lots," volunteered the witness, smiling sourly and much pleased with himself.

The court looked for Mr. Butterworth to interpose an objection, and was surprised to find him beaming amiably on the witness with every symptom of good humor.

"It was your lot to sit next to the testator when he was in the druggist rôle?" continued Mr. Friesman.

"Always," declared the witness. "I always got that seat when he lived over his apothecary days. Any boarder says I didn't, is a liar."

"Tut, tut," remonstrated Mr. Friesman gently. "We know, Mr. Brurr, you suffered much because of the decedent's whims, but the court will insist that we stick to the evidence. The shoemaker to his last, eh? Ha! ha!"

"May I inquire whether the witness spells his name with four 'r's,' or five?" asked Mr. Butterworth, gravely.

Mr. Brurr knit his brows in perplexity as he tried to recollect just how he did spell his name; then he reddened and lost much of his aplomb, while counsel for the contestants entered upon a long tirade against the evil propensity of some brutalized individuals to browbeat witnesses. But the court, conceded to be the only licensed exponent of irony in his department, gave a strained smile and commanded, "Proceed."

"On those occasions when you were unfortunate enough to be served first by the decedent, did he, or did he not, serve you with minute portions?" asked Mr. Friesman next, looking very stern.

"I should style his helpings as minims," replied the witness stoutly. "I know I never saw such small bits of food with the naked eye, either before or since."

"I suggest," blandly interrupted Mr. Butterworth, "that the witness desist from further characterizations and describe just how he was served."

"Yes, tell what you saw him do," directed the surrogate, making a double chin as he leaned over the bench before

retreating to the depths of the morning paper.

The witness gloomily tucked up his cuffs as if standing gingerly behind a poison-laden counter with graduating glass in hand, and proceeded to give an excellent pantomime of placing the infinitesimally small portions on a plate. "First," he explained, "he would carefully spoon out a modicum of mashed potato, look at it critically, shake his head slowly, and then replace a portion of it—if I may use the word 'portion' in connection with what already was reduced to the last degree of viscosity."

"Very good," approved Mr. Butterworth, nodding his head genially.

Reassured, the witness continued: "Then would come just a hint of young onions, and at times I was of the opinion, I won't say I was positive, but I was of the opinion, he added a trace of squash. If I remember correctly I thought I detected a trace of that vegetable on two or three occasions. Possibly I was led to believe this on seeing his hand flutter over the squash dish. I want to say nothing but what is exact."

"Admirable," cooed Mr. Butterworth. "And can't you even draw it to a finer nicety if you could say you saw his hand 'hesitate,' rather than 'flutter' over the squash?"

"I fear, sir, I must adhere to 'flutter,'" replied the witness firmly.

"Witness says 'fluttered,'" repeated the court heavily, emerging briefly from the paper and as quickly diving back again.

Mr. Bilker smiled pityingly on Mr. Butterworth, while Mr. Friesman asked, "And what about the meat?"

"I can best describe my share of the meat," explained the witness sorrowfully, by declaring that I can remember no occasion on one of those druggist days when he gave me enough to shape into a modestly-sized scarf pin." And he glared defiantly at Mr. Butterworth.

But my chief seemed only pleased and repeated lovingly, " 'Scarf pin.' Unusually good." And Mr. Bilker looked surprised and froze his grin into a grimace and rubbed his fat nose dubiously.

"That's all," cried Mr. Friesman triumphantly.



"The proponent concedes," said Mr. Butterworth, rising to his feet and mechanically trying to take snuff from his watch, "that the testator labored under the delusion, at times, that squash was prussic acid, onions were vitriol, and potato was arsenic. But counsel forgot to pursue the line of evidence to the end. Now, witness, did you ever see the testator serve more than one person at a meal in this eccentric fashion?"

"No," replied the witness readily, "he always seemed satisfied with starving me. The rest were served in the ordinary fashion."

"Possibly suggesting to you," smiled Mr. Butterworth lightly, "that the impress of the drug store days was easily obliterated?"

"I object to what suggestions this witness may have received," cried Mr. Friesman, while Mr. Bilker swaggered forward frowning.

"It's not material," agreed the court, dodging from behind his paper. But Mr. Butterworth smiled in satisfaction as he observed the judge make a stealthy note in his book.

"At any rate," persisted Mr. Butterworth, "the proponent, Miss Tanker, did not have to endure what you did?"

"We object!" shouted counsel in concert.

"The witness may tell what he observed," ruled the court.

"I should say not," said the witness, laboring under the conviction he was damaging Miss Tanker's case. "She always got just the same treatment every time she came. He'd roll back his sleeves a bit, tuck up his cuffs, and quietly and quickly serve her, neither stinting nor overloading her plate."

"That's all," said Mr. Butterworth.

"Jacob Finch," called Mr. Friesman, and a short, ruddy-faced man, giving the impression of being perpetually devoured by inward laughter, rolled forward and nodded his head humorously to the surrogate, as if the two of them had a huge secret to chuckle over.

"Pinch?" cried the court, assuming a frigid and friendship-discouraging mien. "Full name in this court, sir."

"If the court please, the name is Jacob

Finch," informed Mr. Friesman with a deep bow.

"Very well," said the court suspiciously, and plainly intimating it might not be so well another time, "you may proceed."

In answer to the preliminary questions the witness explained that he boarded at the Sumley's and had often observed the decedent's eccentric method of serving the dinner.

"You were best acquainted with him in what rôle?" asked Mr. Friesman.

"When he was generous," grinned the witness. "I guess you'd call it the 'miller' rôle."

"What kind of a hat, if any, did he wear on those days?"

"A wide-brimmed, dusty-colored hat."

"And he was almost lavish in his helpings?"

The witness puffed his fat face in an intensity of emotion and leaning well forward exclaimed, "Lavish? Why, he was rash! He simply dealt the grub out in slathers."

"Witness, explain in the English language what you mean by 'slathers,'" and the court's command, hurled from over the top of the paper, was backed up by a judicial glare that caused Mr. Finch to cuddle spasmodically in his chair. Mr. Bilker half rose, as if to resent some violence.

Finally composing himself Mr. Finch explained, "He simply squandered the food, sir."

"Tell what he did," hurriedly requested Mr. Friesman, forestalling another rebuke from the bench.

"Well, I always, as a rule, happened to get the chair next to him when he was in a mellow, merry mood. The others said I was shrewd enough to guess when the streak was about to crop out." And the witness could not restrain a self-congratulatory chuckle. "Anyway, there he'd sit, big hat and all, and he'd reach for my plate and usually tip over something in doing so."

"Wait a minute," said Mr. Butterworth. "Did you ever notice his hand to tremble or be awkward when serving Mr. Brurr on his druggist days?"

"No, he was always calm as ice; as

dainty and precise as a hen picking up corn."

"As what?" thundered the court.

"As any one could be, sir," trembled the witness.

"Huh!" said the court.

"When wearing the miller's hat and waiting on you he was awkward, you say?" repeated Mr. Butterworth, pleasantly.

"Awfully so. Simply wasteful. If he broke anything he'd laugh good-naturedly. He impressed me in that mood as not caring a rap for quantity. Kind of a slap dash, here-have-some-more sort of a style.

"Tell what he did," said Mr. Friesman.

"Why, he'd grab my plate just as if it was a two bushel bag, and he'd handle the spoon as if it was a scoop. And Lord! if you could only have seen Brurr's face when he'd slap in all the potato at one jolt. Ha! ha!"

"What's that?" cried the court.

"Hard. I said he'd slap it in hard, if it please you, your honor," the witness attempted to mollify as he spun in his chair like a top.

"Go on," commanded the court, holding his paper so one eye could be constantly focussed on the witness, "and cut out this slang, hereafter. The court won't stand for it."

"Thank you, sir," gulped the witness, wiping his face desperately. "Well, he'd take the spoon and rasp it into the squash and with one slap—I mean flop—he'd slap it all onto my plate. Then he'd jab the fork into about eight pounds of meat and whang—excuse me—bang it down on my plate—"

"Witness," broke in the court's icy voice, "I fear I shall have to fine you for contempt. I believe you used the expression 'whang.'"

"If the court please," grovelled Mr. Friesman, "I think he said 'bang.' Not an elegant expression, but better—"

"I said 'swang,'" cried Mr. Finch in terror.

"Well, don't do it again. Go on."

"And after he'd helped me, of course, there wasn't much left to satisfy the cravings of the others," labored the witness heavily. Then his face lost its look of fear as he, too, reverted to the past and



DRAWN BY WALTER J. ENRIGHT

"'As what?' thundered the court."

added, "Mr. Tanker was a good old sort, but it was killing to see Brurr's face when I got it all."

"Ahem!" coughed Mr. Bilker warningly.

"And then what happened?" inquired Mr. Friesman hurriedly.

"Why, I'd pass my plate around and the others would help themselves. The old fellow would never recant during the meal, you know. He'd always follow up his hand."

"That's all," and Mr. Friesman sighed in relief.

Mr. Butterworth had the witness repeat how the decedent's riot of generosity had given the impression he was living over the days when he was a miller and accustomed to shovel feed into boxes, bags, barrels, and freight cars. Then he asked:

"You have seen Miss Tanker there?"

"She used to come and take dinner once a week," said the witness.

"Did you ever see the testator stint her in the matter of food?"

"No, sir."

"Did you ever see him overload her plate?"

"No, sir."

"Always served her rationally?"

"Yes, sir, I should say so."

"Do you know what day in the week she used to come?"

"Yes, it was always a Thursday."

"Did she ever sit next to him?"

"She always did."

"One more question: Did you ever see him wear the skull cap, or the wide-brimmed hat when she sat next to him and he served her first?"

"No; he'd tuck back his sleeves a bit, pull back his cuffs and act real natural."

The remaining witnesses gave practically the same testimony. They had seen the testator when he was laboring under the delusion he was a druggist, when he was all neatness and infinitely precise. They had seen him when he was the rollicking miller, when he was all jollity and served too generously. And each had also noticed him when he was neither one nor the other, and each admitted these last, ordinary moments were when Miss Tanker was present.

"And it would all tend to prove," said Mr. Butterworth in the course of his summary of the evidence, "that this testator's love for his cousin, my client, recalled him to the realms of normality, and it clinches my argument that insane as he was at times, there was in his mind a strain of rationality that was sufficient, as this learned court well knows, to enable him to execute his last will and testament. It was sufficient to enable him to fully realize just how he wanted his small estate to be left, and once we decide that to be the fact it makes no difference to this court if he were as mad as the proverbial hatter at other times and on other topics.

"Therefore, I have omitted to call any witnesses. My belief was and, more strongly than ever, is, that Hiram Tanker, weakened in mind, assuming at times the delusion he was a drug clerk, or a miller, returned in the interim to a soundness of intellect and was competent to make a will. His hallucinations were harmless. In the interstices of his fickle fancy there always abided a sane desire and a competent inclination to leave his little all to this spinster, his poorly-to-do cousin. He did so, and I am confident this court, in view of all the circumstances and evidence, in remembering his vagaries never included her, will allow it to stand."

Of course Messrs. Bilker and Friesman made long arguments to the contrary, but at the conclusion of it all the court pursed up a judicial lip and ruled the instrument should be probated. As the estate was not large enough to warrant a further fight in appeals, counsel for the contestants were much disgruntled.

"The more I think of it the more that case pleased me," said Mr. Butterworth, a few days later, just after Bilker had surly informed us that no appeal would be taken. "It was really interesting to allow their own witnesses to blaze a trail for us through the testator's mind. On either side was the morass and swamp of delusion and incompetency, and yet, through it all, ran a straight, firm highway of abiding reason."

"Miss Tanker to see you, sir," announced Jethuel, and our happy client burst in on us, laden with many expressions of lively good will for our services.

After she had exhausted her thanks and was preparing to depart, she stopped by the door and concluded, "Only, I wish I could have been a witness. There were so many things about Cousin Hiram that I know would have interested the court. They all told about his being a druggist and a miller, but not one of them seemed to remember that once he was a clerk in the county poor department."

"Huh!" ejaculated my chief, advancing his spectacles to the end of his nose.

"No, not one of them seemed to recall it," she repeated. "I suppose I should have forgotten it, but I can always see just how quiet and grave and kindly he looked as he sat behind his little counter on one day in the week, impartially giving to each county charge a fair and decent portion of food. There he'd sit, hair slicked back, sleeves tucked back a bit, cuffs pulled back, and I don't believe he ever varied an ounce in bread, onions, or potatoes, in all the allowances he made to the different families."

"Dear! dear!" sighed the chief, gazing helplessly at me. "And what day was it he used to deal out the supplies?"

"Always on a Thursday," she replied brightly.

"Hum! Miss Tanker—er—if I were

you, I'd not talk any more about this case, or the decedent. I'm afraid if you do they'll decide to appeal. Simply don't mention it," he groaned. Then he asked, "You were there at the boarding house on what day in the week?"

"Always on a Thursday. That's why I always think of Cousin Hiram as he used to look when in the poor department," she explained.

"No! No! put up your pocket book," said the chief firmly, as she began fumbling in a black bag. "I cannot take any fee for this. It is all right, madam. Glad to have been of service."

And after he had gallantly bowed her out and answered her parting, radiant smile with a comical mixture of woe and amusement, he turned his whimsical gaze on me and observed:

"My boy, that straight and narrow highway of reason is fast becoming more narrow, and in places I see wash-outs. A man may possess a dual personality and retain a modicum of rationality, but it is drawing too fine a line when he triplicates his hallucinations. An equitable clerk on Thursdays! She sat next to him at the table and always received the same treatment—on Thursdays! Oh, if Bilker only knew!"

## We Announce Our Engagement

BY NORVELL HARRISON

I had not wanted to come to see Priscilla. As I rang the bell, I recalled once hearing Boyd Sutton say that going to see a girl, to whom one had once been engaged, was like trying to do one's own Christmas shopping. It showed one that nothing, no college education or tour abroad afterward, really fitted one to cope with the great issues of life. I had always been fortunate about my Christmas shopping, owing to Aunt Susan—just as I had been fortunate about not being placed in the other predicament; but when Priscilla sent for me, when I saw how clearly her note was meant to imply that though all was over, I still owed her an apology, I

said that there was nothing for me to do but to go to her.

The butler who opened the door ushered me into the front drawing room; a chilly place, whose brooding calm seemed to foretell the new loneliness of my life. When she came into the room, however, the lonely feeling vanished.

She wore a gown of some diaphanous blue material; as I stood up to greet her, I remembered that only last week she had said to me that if a girl wore a new gown for a man it signified two things, that she liked the gown and that she liked the man. The blue gown was one that I had never seen before; but sentiments that



she had expressed in the past must not, of course, make any difference to me now.

We shook hands distantly.

"Shall we go into the library?" Her tone was infinitely remote. She moved her skirts from my immediate vicinity the instant her fingers left mine. "I believe you will be more comfortable there."

I followed her silently. As we entered the cushiony, leathery room, however, the absurdity of what she said forced a comment from me.

"Do you think," I asked as we faced one another over the expanse of black-oak table she put between us, "that I care very much whether I am—er—physically comfortable on this occasion or not? A man who is going to be hung," I put a bitter emphasis on the words, "does not, I am quite sure, insist upon enjoying the ride to the gallows."

"You think not?" She drew a footstool towards her with elaborate care. "Personally, I—fancy that if I were in the electrocuting chair, I should want a cushion behind my back. And that—I mean those lights"—she indicated the cluster of lights above her, "I certainly find very annoying. I don't know why they are hopping so."

The electric lights in the chandelier were certainly hopping, but they did not annoy me in the least. I said so.

She appeared totally indifferent as to how the failing luminaries affected me. "You—brought my letters?" In the wavering light, I could see the perfect *sang froid* with which she asked the question.

"Yes."

"And—?"

"And the pictures—six of them, I believe—and an embroidered tobacco pouch and—a pair of sleeve links—" I hesitated. "Before I give them back to you," I said, my eyes looking squarely into hers, "I should very much like to know just—why I am called upon to relinquish these souvenirs?"

She raised her brows until they threatened to become lost in the light fluff of hair on her forehead.

"You think it necessary to ask?" Her tone conveyed extreme surprise.

"If I am to know," I answered.

"You have forgotten, then—the—the things that happened last night?"

"None of them."

"Then, if you remember—if you remember that you—that you kissed me—" She flushed brilliantly.

"I remember kissing you quite a number of times," I replied calmly.

Remember it! I could have indicated from where I sat the exact spot where my luckless kiss had landed. I could feel now the warm palpitation of her cheek beneath my lips.

"I did not ask you to recall any other time," she replied, her flush deepening; "they were different. There were no other people there then."

Suddenly, the lights above us sprang into brighter being, dropped, flared again, then went out altogether, leaving us in total darkness.

"Oh," she breathed; then, "there are some lamps somewhere, but I am afraid I shall fall over things if I try to find them. I—don't know what to do."

"Nothing," I answered. After all, my life's happiness could be snatched from me as well when there were no lights as when there were. "They will turn them on in a moment or two, I dare say. Anyhow, it makes no difference. I shall not detain you long."

I leaned toward her, raising my voice slightly.

"Still," I said, "I am completely in the dark—"

"You certainly can't blame me for the lights," she said indignantly. "You would not mind, I suppose, if I maimed myself for life against bookcases and tables looking for a lamp. You—you—want me to do it—"

"—As to why the caress I offered you last night was different from the others," I finished. "I do not care in the least about a lamp. The people about us did not see us, you know."

"That is just it," she interrupted. "If they had, I should have felt obliged to go on and martyr you, so that they would know that I was not that kind of girl. But as long as they didn't see us, I can act for my principle alone. Oh, I wish they'd turn those stupid lights on."

"For your principle," I repeated



stupidly, striving to pierce with my eyes the gloom that enshrouded us.

"Yes. You knew that I didn't want our engagement known. And yet you deliberately chose to ignore my wishes and kiss me where chaperons and musicians and everybody could see you. And, of course, if you don't really respect my wishes—or anything—we couldn't get along together."

Something very like the harbinger of a sob shook her voice. I got up. I would go over and sit beside her. It was really too absurd, our talking to each other through this wall of blackness. I moved cautiously. Before I had taken three steps, a maddening blow on the head brought me to a stand still.

"I am sure that you can see—" she began.

"I can not—" I answered somewhat irritated. "Do you think I am a mole? Do you think if I could see I would deliberately jam my head against the sharp part of the mantelpiece?" The remark was too absurd.

"I was going to say—you can see that I was right in not wishing our engagement to be known. You ought not to have gotten up. Feel along the mantel until you come to the middle, and then bend down slowly. There is a chair there."

I felt along the mantel. Subsequently, I bent down. A good way down, I came in contact with something, something large and resistless.

"A man with any delicacy of perception—any fineness of vision—" she went on. Well, I had both. I saw at once that I had seated myself on a growing fern or something of the sort. I stood up. After all, as I had told her, it made no difference about my being comfortable.

"—would understand that anything as sacred as an engagement becomes less sacred when discussed by all the people one knows."

"I do not agree with you in the least," I said convincingly. I made unseen gestures with my hands. "Our engagement should have been made public long ago!" I emphasized each word clearly. "A dozen times," I said, "I have seen you sitting about with fellows who I knew were talking love to you. A dozen times

I have been forced to be nice to a girl whose mother wanted her to marry somebody. This is wrong and useless. I do not think that it is even—even decent."

She gasped. "Oh, how dare you," she breathed. I knew in the dark how her eyes flashed.

"Even decent," I repeated, firmly. "People ought to know. And," I added, feeling that I was gaining ground, "in regard to that other matter, I wish to state that I did not kiss you deliberately. The moment before I did not know I was going to kiss you. You make no allowance for impulse, for desires not dictated by reason."

I had been edging my way up closer to her. Now my foot projected itself into an object which fell at my touch, scattering a mass of something over my feet. I have always disliked waste paper baskets. To me they seem the very embodiment of untidiness, the trademark of cleaning day.

"You never look before you leap," she accused, "you always—"

"I was not leaping," I answered indignantly. "Why, in heaven's name, should I take this occasion to practice up for hurdle races?"

"This darkness is really too absurd," she exclaimed. "I don't know what you are talking about. I was telling you that you always acted on impulse. You never stop to think what is right, or what I like, or anything. You—you don't care. You would just as soon do what I don't want you to do as not. You know you would."

The sob was nearer. I must go to her. No matter what physical injury I did myself, I must show her that I still cared.

"It is that," she went on, a little hysterically, "which makes me know that it is right for me to end our engagement."

My outstretched hand touched something hard and leathery. It was the end of the couch on which she sat.

"Priscilla," I said, standing still, "you know very well that I do care. If I had known how you felt about my kissing you before people, I should not have kissed you. I would rather have died than kiss you."

I waited—no answer.

"If you break our engagement," I

went on, "I dare say I shall die, anyhow. I certainly will not live. For," I added, bending nearer, "life without you is impossible."

Still no answer.

I moved along the couch and sat down beside her. "You don't care, you know you don't," she sobbed. In the darkness, I put my arm about her.

Somewhere near at hand I heard voices, but the kindly gloom made them of no moment to me.

"Sweetheart," I said, "if you keep on, you will really tell a story. And I suspect that you have already made your nose red." I thought that she leaned a little toward me. "If they had seen," I whispered, "you would have married me."

"But they didn't see," she sobbed, "and so I must—act—for my principle."

"But if you were still willing to marry me," I urged, "you must still care. And if you care for me, it is wrong not to marry me! It is very wrong. Think upon what a trivial thing our marriage has turned."

Electric lights are not unlike women. Unreasonably, wholly without a premonitory hint, the chandelier above us suddenly shot a pitiless light into every corner of the room. I turned, blinking, to look at Priscilla. There were tears on her cheeks. Her lips still quivered. Her misty gown, which matched the heavenly blue of her eyes, was undeniably rumpled. I put my arms about her again, and

kissed her a great many times.

"Dear heart," I said, "let us pretend that—"

With a little cry, she sprang up. Instinctively I, too, arose and followed the direction of her eyes. In the drawing room stood three people: Peters evidently ushering in guests; behind Peters came Samson carrying a lighted lamp; in the door which opened from the library into the hall stood Priscilla's mother. In the other library door stood a maid carrying another lamp. Half-way down the stairs, which could be partially seen, under the high arch which lead from the music room, stood Priscilla's father, evidently arrested in his descent upon the drawing-room. Nobody spoke. Vaguely I turned from the yellow light which Samson carried, to the red one which Gretta bore. Impartially I glanced from Priscilla's mother to the bonneted lady in the drawing room.

Then my inspiration came to me.

"You are just in time," I said, letting my eyes sweep from Priscilla's mother to the portion of Priscilla's father which I could detect. "Priscilla and I are announcing our engagement."

Slowly the detached ones came together. Before Priscilla's mother reached her, or Priscilla's father had stepped into the hall, I turned toward Priscilla. The tears had not yet dried upon her cheeks. But the searching rays of the chandelier revealed something else. Priscilla was smiling.

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## Bachelor's Hall

BY GEORGE ALLAN ENGLAND

Mr. William Brice Peverley—Billy Peverley, "of New York and Boston," as he liked to call himself—stood on the station platform at Lake Umsit and watched the tail-lights of the train winking redly at him as they dwindled rapidly in the gloom. When they had shrunk quite away 'round a curve, he sauntered into the tiny station, looking for the baggagemaster. Master there was none; only a very bony young

man with red hands and a singularly fuzzy lip. Him he hailed:

"Boy! Oh, boy! I say, do you know where I can get any one to row me over to Camp Umsit, my sister's—that is, Mrs. Norton's camp, you know? I'll pay half a dollar!"

"Wa'al, mista, I dunno; p'r'aps I kin carry you over if you don't mind a leak." Fuzzy-lip carefully set a glass lamp on the

telegraph table and removed the chimney with deliberation. "But, I vum, mista," he continued, "whatever possesses you to wanta git thar, anyhow? Why, it ain't be'n used fer three year—that is, by them as owns it, an' now—"

"You said you had a boat?" interrupted Billy, with some asperity. "When can you row me over?"

"Right off, right square off, mista!" answered the unperturbed one, lighting his lamp and replacing the chimney. "Right plum' off! D' you mind settin' outside the deepo'? I've gotta lock up fer the night. I'll put the lamp in the winder; they's a truck to set on, right outside."

Billy grumbled a little to himself, but said nothing; Fuzzy very deliberately locked up and melted away into the surrounding gloom.

"I'll be back right off!" he called to Billy. "Set right thar an' make yourself to home!"

A hasty word rose to Billy's lips, but he choked it back and, taking his pipe and tobacco, seated himself on the truck and made ready to smoke. Fumbling for matches in his pocket, his hand touched a paper. He drew it forth.

"The deuce!" he exclaimed. "Sister's letter! You're at the bottom of all this, you good-for-nothing sheet! Here I am, buried in the Maine wilderness, thousands, millions of miles from Beacon street and the Loungers', all on account of you! Oh, I'll get even yet; I'll roll you up to make pipe-lights, that's what!"

He cast a troubled eye over the page. By the light of Fuzzy's oil-lamp the writing looked big and scratchy. The paper bore the seal of the Ponce de Leon, and it said:

Dear Brother Billy,

Please don't think I'm crazy when you find out what I want you to do, for I'm not—I'm only trying to make things pleasant and cozy for Aline. She and I are coming north next week, and you positively must run down to Camp Umsit and get it into apple-pie order before we arive. We can't possibly be dumped down into it after it's been shut up three long years. You and you alone can save us!

I ask this chiefly on Aline's account—she hates dirt and disorder worse than poison. You remember her, of course? Aline Dubey—the pretty slim girl you met at Mrs. Hamlin's last year? We really must



DRAWN BY FLORENCE E. NOSWORTHY

"Aline, the girl you met last year."

have the camp impress her well at first—open fire, neat little living-room and all that. First impressions are apt to be so lasting, you know!

Look for us Friday night, without fail. Remember, Aline is much prettier than when you saw her last—she speaks of you often as "that irreproachable, ornamental brother." If she didn't consider you a trifle lily-handed, I think she'd like you well. There, isn't that a "clincher," as the boys say?

Now, I really must finish this. You needn't write—we couldn't get an answer anyway. Just betake yourself to Camp Umsit and wait for us, that's all. The key's in the spring-house, under the little table. Clean up the camp and grounds, see that we have plenty of wood and supplies, and generally sweep and garnish for our coming. What a lark it will be for you. I only wish I were a man!

Your Big Sister,  
ADDIE.

P. S. Aline sends her best regards and says you're positively to obey me!

Billy read it all through, from beginning to end. He groaned softly to himself. "What a lark!" he quoted. "M-m-mm, yes, *aber nicht!* She wishes she were a

man! So do I, about a thousand times more than she does! And Aline's right back of her in everything, too; that's the deuce of it, for Aline's certainly a little thoroughbred if there ever was one. Woe, woe! How much longer is that fool boy going to keep me waiting, I'd like to know? Say, I'd like to have him by the neck—perhaps I wouldn't teach him the quickstep, eh?"

He struck a match and moodily lighted his pipe. It was growing really late; stars began to wink and glimmer; several millions of little new frogs in a near-by cove shrilled insistently; mist glimmered white through a cedar swamp where a whip-poor-will was calling its insistent command. Once in a while Billy heard a drum-drum-drumming, very far away, which began slowly and ended in a muffled roulade. No one was at hand to tell him about Mr. Partridge's wooing, so he only listened, smoked, and marvelled greatly.

"By Jove!" he told himself, "this may not be so bad, after all!"

After he had burned two pipefuls of fine-cut, he saw Fuzzy come suddenly back out of the night, bearing a lantern, keys, and a long-handled dipper.

"All right, mista," the youth remarked, in a perfectly toneless voice, "we'll cut across the medder to th' cove."

Billy, a bit chastened, picked up his suit-case and followed his guide, who led him down a path over a stile, and finally to a rotting wharf where a boat lay half-submerged, with a pail floating 'round inside.

"We gotta bail some," said Fuzzy. "Dipper or pail fer you?"

Billy's eyebrows wrinkled to a frown, which a whimsical smile chased instantly away.

"The pail, please, if you really don't care," he answered, with exaggerated solicitude. "You'd better use the dipper, so as not to splatter your hands!"

"All right, mista; but I don't mind water. Shucks, no! I'm used to it. Lived 'round the lake all my life." His shoes and a certain ill-defined halo of fishiness bore witness to his veracity.

Billy carefully spread his handkerchief on the wharf and knelt down. Fuzzy

grinned silently and mounted a seat. Both set to work.

"This is a sight for gods and men!" thought Billy; but neither men nor gods happened along to witness it. They bailed and they bailed, by the light of the lantern, until finally they came to the dregs, redolent of certain fragmentary earth-worms and flakes of paint.

"She'll do now," opined the lad. "She'll float till we git thar. Climb in!"

"*A vos ordres!*" murmured Billy.

"Huh?"

"Nothing—I simply said I was at your disposal."

"That so? What kinda talk you call that?"

"Oh—French, of a sort."

"H'm — French! Yes, I've heered French. They's a gang of Canuck hab-itaws to work on the querry a piece below here. Be you—?"

"How long a row is it?" interrupted Billy, a shade of irritation in his voice. "I don't want to stay out all night, you understand!"

"Aw, don't you worry! Goin' to be here long?"

"Long enough to get the place in order—to fix it up ship-shape."

"You don't say!" Fuzzy's grin seemed to Billy particularly ghoulish and disconcerting. "Huh, I cal'late you'll think it needs fixin' up!"

"Why?"

"Aw, no matter. Wait till you see, that's all!"

Billy brooded. "Confound this Bœotian, anyway!" thought he. "I'm hanged if I'll ask him another question. What will be, will be!"

Fuzzy had taken the oars. "Git in!" he commanded. Billy stowed his suit-case and climbed in. Fuzzy pulled away, his long, even strokes betraying the practiced oarsman. Billy breathed a trifle more calmly; the cool black waters soothed his troubled spirit, and the passionless stars, mirrored in unknown depths, spoke of an abiding peace. Presently his feet began to feel wet. Looking down he detected much water in the bottom of the boat.

"By Jove, you!" he remonstrated. "Have we got to bail the whole lake through your punt?"



"Aw, don't worry—a little water won't hurt you none!"

The boat ploughed heavily along amid mutterings and the splashes of dipperfuls of bilge. At last, after what seemed hours and hours, the young Charon rowed into a deep bay and dexterously brought the boat up to a mouldy landing, barely visible in the dark.

"Are you—eh—sure this is the place?" asked Billy.

"Camp Umsit, you said? Well, this is her. Follow the path up!"

"I know, I know!" grumbled Billy, clambering out with his wet suit-case and stamping his feet. "Here, take your fifty cents!"

With less urbanity than usual he handed down the coin. Fuzzy bit it and slid it into his overalls' pocket; then, grasping the oars, backed away, whistling between his teeth.

"Oh, I say," asked Billy, "can't you lend me that lantern? Here—here's a dollar! I'll buy it!"

"Sorry, mista, but it b'longs to the Gran' Trunk, an' I das-sent sell railroad stuff. Here's matches, though. Better build a fire; you won't find any ile in the camp, but they's lots o' bresh on the place. You ain't much used to campin', be you? Anythin' else? No? Well, s'long."

He tossed a few "eight-day" matches, the blue-torture kind, onto the wharf and made off, his course marked by a shrill whistle, the rhythm of oars and occasional splashes when he stopped to bail. Finally all these sounds blended into a vanishing echo upon the bosom of the great waters, leaving Billy Peverley "of New York and Boston"—and Camp Umsit—to chew the cud of reflection on a rotting wharf in an obscure lake of the Maine wilderness, at half-past ten of a dark May evening.

Now, this same Billy Peverley, indubitably possessed of

"nerve," was a resourceful young man: resourceful, that is, as measured by the standards of city men. He could not have kept a straight course through the forest by means of the moss-grown trees, nor could he have struck fire with his knife-blade, a quartz pebble, and a bit of punky pine-root; but, nevertheless, he was ingenious and never let circumstances "down" him. So it befell that, standing on the sorry wharf in the Egyptian darkness, he resolved, despite everything, that he would shortly deliver Camp Umsit into his sister's hands—and Aline's—cozy, clean, and habitable as the daintiest of pretty women could possibly desire.

With high resolve, then, backed by an almost total ignorance of everything practical, he picked up his wet suit-case and followed the path toward the camp. It seemed to him that, since his last visit, things had changed considerably; the path



DRAWN BY FLORENCE E. NOSWORTHY

"Peeled the unwashed tubers."



had narrowed to a mere trail, and a disconcerting air of abandon reigned everywhere. The porch, by evanescent match-light, was not more encouraging; two steps were broken, bottles and papers lay strewn about, and a shutter was hanging by one hinge.

"Some cursed picnic!" he murmured. "Let's have the key, anyway; it's in the spring-house, under the table." The spring-house he remembered well; it stood at one side in a clump of alders. "Lord!" he exclaimed, stumbling over a stone, "if there were only a moon to help a fellow, now!"

The spring-house was still there, but the little table had disappeared. His blue matches showed him the spring, all clogged with leaves, but no table—that was indisputably gone.

"Here's a 'facer!'" he said out loud. "If the key's under the table and there isn't any table, why, where the—Halifax—is the key?" Thought availed nothing, so back he blundered to the piazza. A little screech-owl—and the smaller they are the more outrageously their yells desecrate the silent places—came and sat in a spruce and curdled his blood till he hurled a bottle at it and sent it circling away, screaming like a soul in agony. The bottle, smashing against a rock, roused a dormant idea. He had read somewhere that wet paper spread on window-glass allowed you to break a pane without splinters. Rummaging a newspaper from his case, he carried it down to the lake and gave it a good soaking in the chilly water, then presently returned with one foot sopping wet. The bank, he had discovered, was very slippery. Not in the least disconcerted, he spread the paper smoothly on a window and struck it sharply with a stick. A jingle of shattered fragments testified that he had at one and the same time destroyed a large pane of plate glass and a popular theory.

"No matter! I'll get in, anyway!" he consoled himself. He did, in fact, get in; the camp smelled about as dry and cheerful as a very old tomb.

"Mighty lucky for the girls I came! Jove, but it looks like the very devil! Ha, wait till I get through with it."

He foraged about for a lamp; and,

though he was brave enough, yet somehow his spine crawled a little, especially when the tiny owl came back and settled on the chimney. A good kerosene lamp, it seemed to him just then, was more to be desired than great riches, and it rejoiced him not when he found the only one in the camp was so nearly empty that the wick would only glow sullenly and emit rancid smoke.

"Now what?" he asked himself. Then Fuzzy's words came to him—"I cal'late you'd better build a fire." "Good idea!" he said, as if answering them. "Clever idea, I swear!" In the extremes of loneliness it is good to speak aloud, that one's own self may hear.

It took him half an hour to make a decent blaze on the hearth; damp sticks and leaves are terribly recalcitrant. When at last the fire-light began to dance, Billy became aware that everything was very much topsy-turvy, that bottles, bone and débris littered the floor, and that the whole place was disreputable and disheartening.

"Some confounded hoboes have been camping in here!" said he. "That explains everything. Oh, say, but I'd like to wring their filthy necks for 'em!" Then, after a pause: "Gad, but I wish I could find some oil, though. Oil and groceries. I could eat a bear—raw! I say, this fire's the limit!" Most of the smoke bellied out into the room, filling his eyes with bitter tears. "Oh, curse the thing!" he ejaculated as he poked the embers, "I bet that owl up there has gone and shut off the draught! Well, fire or no fire, I've got to sleep—none of the beds for me, just yet, either, so here goes for the floor!"

Rolling himself in a couch-cover he lay down by the fire with his suit-case for a pillow—lav and listened to the secrets that pine-tree and pebbly beaches are always whispering to each other and always have been, since the world was. Presently his breathing deepened and his body relaxed. For the first time in his life Billy Peverley had performed manual labor, had gone to bed unbathed, with his boots on, and had sought sleep on the floor. Curiously enough, never had sleep seemed more sweet as he drifted off and away into the great darkness of that fathomless woodland night.

The little birds that "maken melodie" now, even as in Dan Chaucer's day, recalled him to the world again—a very different world from that of shudders, gropings, screech-owls, and a clinging darkness. Stretching his long arms to take the cramps out, Billy stepped onto the broad piazza. Instant admiration thrilled him, as at the sight of a marvelous woman.

"My Lord, my Lord, but that's great, though! Grand! Splendid! Why, Maine—Maine is 'paradise enow!' And the air! And the big red ball of fire over the mountains!"

The lake, a sheet of trembling quick-silver bathed in vapors, lay at full length before him. All about it towered the eternal hills, shaggy with dark forests, hills whence arose the morning mists, white as wool and spun fine by the enmeshing tree tops. Every hill and tree and patch of color hung inverted in the liquid mirror, over whose surface skimmed a multitude of swallows in pursuit of midges. Here and there slow silver circles widened, where a trout or pickerel had leaped, glistening, into the upper world. Suffused with dazzling fog, through which the sun glowered goldenly, the morning sky hung arching over all; beyond lay a distant hint of blue mountains. It was a wilderness awakening to the day, a jewelled dawn wherein the hand of man spoiled nothing.

"To think they're riding on the 'L,' in town!" mused Billy. "Going to offices! Breakfasting at clubs! Good Lord, deliver us!"

As a child with a new picture-book, so was this young metropolitan; long-buried atavisms began to stir in the roots of his soul. "I say, but it is glorious!" he exclaimed a few minutes later, after a plunge in the cool waters, thrilling with new life to his finger-tips. Having made a meagre breakfast of such odds and ends as his suit-case afforded, he undertook a general inspection of the premises and made discovery of an unputtied window-pane.

"Those hoboos were wiser than I was about getting in!" he pondered, beginning to realize that all useful knowledge is not of necessity filtered through college professors. "They've used all the fire-wood,

split up that table I couldn't find, and frozen onto most of the silver, too. Anyway, Addie's Hawadji-ware is all right—if I only had something to put on it! Grub, real edibles—that's what I want! I'll get out the old skiff, row over to town and lay in supplies. Then I'll be ready to tackle this horrible disorder."

It proved a sore job to get the boat out of the boat-house and row to the village; Billy's hands were blistered before he reached the cove. He tied the boat there, however, with good courage, and went on up to the store.

"No, we ain't got none," said Brooks, the store-keeper, in answer to Billy's inquiries for beef and green-stuff. "All we got is right in plain sight. Bananias? Yes, an' potatoes, too; no bread, but I kin give you doughnuts, an' they's half a fresh-killed hawg out in the shed. Shouldn't wonder if you'd like it better 'n the salted, seein' you're from the city. City folks is cur'ous 'bout their vittles, anyway—always hankerin' arter some fool grub. As fer me, gimme my pork, says I, my fried potatoes, an' my beans, with lots o' hot grease onto 'em, an' my tea an' sweet vittles—that'll do me twenty-one times a week, yes, sir! But city folks, city folks—"

By ten o'clock Billy had breakfasted on doughnuts, milk, and bananas, and felt returning strength in his young body.

"What now?" he asked himself. "What's first? Well, I guess I'll tackle the grounds and then work inward to the—the nucleus, as it were. Two days ought to finish everything; then I'll loaf and fish and wait for the girls."

He found a rake and went willingly to work. Very soon he discovered that raking makes the sun extremely hot, that it causes the back-muscles to ache unpleasantly, and that it induces gnawing hunger. He stuck to it, however, till he felt certain it must be noon, in spite of his watch that pointed to eleven.

"I'm boss here, anyway," he assured himself, "and by every law, now that I've worked, I've a right to eat. I'm *chet*, too—I'm going to cook something extra choice."

To Billy, meals had always been a purely mechanical matter; you ordered

what you wanted, got it, and paid for it with money, the spending of which involved no sacrifice, no labor, no discomfort. His first cookery dealt this theory a death-blow. The preparation of even the simplest food, he discovered, required time and labor excessive. First of all he made a fire in the kitchen stove which answered very well, save that all the smoke came out into the room instead of going up the chimney. The management of stove-draughts had been omitted from his curriculum, as had been the care of tea-kettles; consequently the kettle soon boiled dry and the spout melted off. A noseless tea-kettle made him laugh, in spite of his choking and eye-watering over the stove.

"Oh, hang the darned thing!" he cried at last. "How's a fellow to know, anyway?"—a question destined to be often on his lips. "Have I got to skin these pota-

toes, I wonder, before frying 'em, and, by the way, can you fry raw potatoes?" Such were his perplexities as he peeled the unwashed tubers, wondering at their excessive grimness.

"There seems to be more potato hanging onto the skin than there is in the core part," he soliloquized. "Fry the skin, eh?" Sager counsels prevailed, and he laid the ragged lumps in the hot spider. A turbulent sizzling and smoke arose like Aladdin's genii to strangle him.

"Well, what in Sam Hill is the matter now? Oh, I guess they need butter! By Jove, how's a fellow to know?"

Eventually Billy contrived a plateful of funny-looking curled-up potatoes; edible, however, with famine as a sauce. "They're nourishing, anyway," he consoled himself after the meal, lighting his pipe. They were, and on the strength of them and some canned meat he toiled all that afternoon like a Trojan. By nightfall the grounds were clean and fair to look upon. Not so was Billy; also, he ached.

"Never mind, I'll soon get hardened to it," he philosophized, "and as for my looks, they don't matter here. I'm roughing it—no use to fix up till the folks come! This free-and-easy life hits me just right, and no mistake. Glad I came? Well, rather!"

For supper he boiled eggs very hard and made cocoa, which he sweetened with frosting from a cake he had. "No use to wash the dishes till they're all used up," he told himself, "so I'll just pile 'em up and let 'em accumulate." He did; they accumulated faster than he had dreamed anything but debts could. The kitchen floor also began to disappear under layers of things, like Troy under the wrack of centuries. Ashes fell on the oil-cloth, where, mixing with spilled liquids, they



DRAWN BY FLORENCE E. NOSWORTHY

"She had collapsed in a chair."

formed pasty spots. Shelves and cupboards became chaotic. Several burnt tins, dominated by the noseless tea-kettle, added just the necessary touch of color. "Never mind!" he still assured himself. "First the outside of the house, then the inside. System, Billy, system!"

The next two days Billy accomplished wonders with the dock, the spring, and the bushes. His cookery also was a marvel; he attempted gems after an old recipe he thought he remembered. "A cup of flour," he soliloquized, "a cup of water, one of saleratus, and a spoonful of salt—there, that ought to bring it just right." He stirred the mixture very painstakingly, then poured it into the gem-iron which he set on the warmest part of the stove. They puffed up amazingly, the gems did, ran out over the stove and smoked abominably; but he rammed them down and let them "sizzle" till he thought they must be done. Because he had not greased the iron, they stuck tight and had to be pried out; moreover, they would not cook on top. That was easily remedied, however, by turning them over and ramming them in upside down. At last they were done, and he ate them—that is, one. The others somehow languished on a top shelf, and Billy never was quite clear as to what eventually befell them.

As for his other doings, they were curious. He chose a bed-room, tried to keep it in order, and even essayed to make the bed. Farewell, bed-room! The living-room became untenable save for a little place in front of the fire, where Billy sat and smoked after his extraordinary repasts. He ceased shaving, abandoned collars, became unkempt, worked as the spirit moved, or basked at full length on the shore of the lake. This collarless, coatless, hatless existence was Elysian, and he doted on it. Hence it was that he began to feel a certain dread of the girls' coming, as the signal for the bondage of conventions again to fall on him.

"Friday!" he thought. "Yes, Friday I positively must get a brace on; Friday, without fail! I'll fix the house up and myself, too; then, good bye all this *dolce far niente!*"

Friday morning came and the grounds

were perfect. Billy made a big bonfire of all the leaves and rubbish, down by the spring-house. Unfortunately the grass was tinder-dry, and the fire ran under the little building; Billy rushed water in pails and saved it, but not before one side was badly charred.

"That's a pure accident!" quoth he, wiping the sweat from his smoky brow. "They can't blame me for accidents. Anyway, the rest of the grounds are in bang-up shape. Now I'm going to clean the camp, get a swell dinner, tog myself out, and wait for the ladies."

He repaired to the camp, got out all the available supplies and set them handy in the living-room where he could ponder over them, bread before the fireplace, eggs in the Morris-chair, milk-pail on the table. Suddenly an idea struck him—those unwashed dishes!

"By Jove! About a million, I guess! Well, I'll just have to heat water, do the darned dishes and carry 'em down to the lake to rinse, I suppose. The sooner it's over, the better!"

He heated water in Addie's hand-beaten brass bowl, did the dishes—oh, yes, he "did" them; nicked two out of every three—piled them all in the dish-pan and started for the wharf. Just as he reached it his sickened eye detected a boat midway down the lake and pulling rapidly toward him, rowed by a man and conveying two women.

"Lord, Lord!" he groaned, "what shall I do? The camp! Myself! Say, I've got to get these out of sight, anyway!"

Turning, he ran back up the path as fast as his big load of dishes would permit. Blinded by the arm-full he tripped fairly over a hemlock root and immediately thereafter found himself, like Marius the Roman, sitting amid ruins. Meantime, the boat had pulled in closer and a clear voice was hailing:

"Billee-e-ee! Oh, Billee-e-ee!"

Billy scrambled up and began throwing the wreckage into the bushes. "You've got to face it!" he kept saying. "Brace up, bluff it, be a man!"

He left the dishes and stalked doggedly back to the wharf, where he stood waiting, disheveled, dirty, and very grim. Handkerchiefs waved from the boat, wherein



Addie and Aline were now plainly to be seen. Billy had no handkerchief, so he waved his dish-cloth.

"Hello, Billy boy!" cried his sister, still some distance away. "Here we are at last! Are you all ready for us?"

"Hel-lo! Hello!" called Billy in reply, discreetly ignoring the question. One moment the idea that he had best "cut and run" occurred to him, but he stood firm with a cheerful expectancy like that of the ox who sees the butcher-man draw insinuatingly near with a long knife.

The boat came up to the wharf. Billy noted distinctly how very pretty and slender Aline was, prettier "in all that

frilly business she's got on," he told himself, than he had even expected. Hot waves chased themselves over his face, beneath the grime, as he steadied the boat and helped the passengers disembark.

"Why, Billy!"

His sister had just got a good look at him. "No, I won't kiss you! Get away! What is the matter! Aline, don't look at him! No, don't you dare shake hands with him! Oh, he's—"

"Addie, Addie, I'm ashamed of you!" broke in Aline, and her voice was balm to Billy's wounds. "How can you? It's all on your account, anyway, and—"

"Oh, I suppose you're right, Aline, but I wanted so much to have him looking *ultra*, for your sake, and now—you don't know how it is; you never had a brother, anyway!"

Then Billy spoke.

"Is this Friday night?"

"Friday night? You poor innocent! Didn't you get my telegram, to—"

"Telegram?"

"Yes, telegram! Saying we'd be here at noon? The Plant Line schedules were all changed May 15th. Well, well! But it's no one's fault; forgive me, boy—you startled me, that's all. You must have been working hard, though! I hadn't the least idea there would be so much to do, and I'm awfully grateful, Billy, indeed I am. The grounds look perfectly stunning—I know the camp must be just delightful. I take back all I've said, and, Billy, you are practical, and strong, and good! Here, I want to kiss you, dirt and all!"

She gave him a sisterly kiss and started up the path; suddenly she shrieked as in agony.

"Oh, oh! Oh, my dishes, my dishes, my beautiful Hawdaji-ware!"

Billy glanced around as if looking for a chance to bolt.

"Perhaps we'd better—better go up and sit on the piazza," he stammered to Aline. "Sister seems a trifle—eh—nervous, and the camp isn't quite ready, but—" He wiped the perspiration from his forehead with a hand which left long, brownish trails.

They walked on up to the camp. Through the open door Billy saw his sis-



DRAWN BY FLORENCE E. NOSWORTHY

"'Nonsense!' she retorted."



ter—she had collapsed in a chair, the Morris chair.

"Eggs!" he shouted, with sudden vehemence. "Eggs! Eggs!"

"What do you mean?" snapped Addie, flushing. "Are you stark raving mad, or what?"

"Eggs! Quick! Get up! You're sitting on my—my eggs!"

Addie leaped up, speechless. Then she started to find her tongue.

"Why—why Billy Peverley—why, you—you—I think you're—"

"Addie! Be calm! He's all right, and you're not going to scold him, mind now!" broke in Aline. "Just cool down and get me an apron! Go take a stroll—out with you!" She half coaxed, half pushed her hostess through the door. "Now, sir!" she went on, "now, Mr. Cook-Chef-Landscape-gardener, you and I are going to set this house to rights before you can say 'Jack Robinson!'" She rolled up her sleeves, displaying a pair of round and very well-tanned arms. "Aren't we, brother Billy?" she added, with a sudden smile.

Billy shot a glance of admiration and infinite gratitude at her.

"You—you're a *dea ex machina* dropped right down from paradise

for my salvation!" he exclaimed.

"Nonsense!" she retorted, deftly tying on an apron. "I'm nothing of the sort. You're as far wrong as Addie, who tries to make me out a regular Miss Prim. As a matter of fact, I'm nothing but a plain every-day American girl with a present penchant for house-cleaning. Trot right along, now, and get me a pail of water! If I'm to be a *dea*, you'll have to step lively!" She lifted her broom in menace. "I warn you now I'm going to rule you with a rod of iron—that is, until this camp is spick and span—with your permission!"

"You have it, if you'll promise never to tell what Umsit and—and Billy looked like when you came!"

"I never will, cross my heart! But don't you dare say I bossed you with a broom-stick—Brother Billy!" Her eyes were tantalizing, her smile mocked him subtly.

"Why should I—Sister Aline? You've no brother, you know, and I—"

"Go, get that water!"

Then Billy Peverley, no longer "of New York and Boston," but of Camp Umsit solely, went gladly down the path to do her bidding, and knew because of Aline's bonny smile that he was most exceeding happy.

## The Marriage of Angeline Delaney

BY PORTER EMERSON BROWNE

With the intuition of woman, whether she receives six dollars a week for working, or six hundred for not working, Angeline Delaney had realized that two proposals were to be expected ever since the chowder party of the Tenth Ward Democratic and Social Club at Rockaway Beach. On the afternoon of that long anticipated and long to be remembered day, Magnus Cassidy had confidentially informed her that he "seen a swell room, wit' a gas stove in it; w're two people cou'd live like dey owned dere own joint; an' all fer two-fifty a week." And in the evening, when she had sat with Abe Levy on the paper-strewn sands, he, in turn,

had confided to her that he was weary of his present round of theaters and pool and other expensive things, and asked her if she did not think that two could live just as cheaply, if not more so, than one. And from these happenings Angeline was certain, as she later remarked to Ellen O'Brien, her associate at the shirtwaist counter, that there "was somethin' doin'."

She had waited for her proposals, and not in vain. And now, until she could sufficiently weigh the *pros* and *cons*, she had refused to make answer to the fervid, if somewhat colloquial, protestations of both suitors; but, with a delicate feminine request to "quit kiddin'," she had scaled

the steep stairs that led to her little fourth floor rear with its Sunday supplement covered walls, where she arrayed herself in a pink cotton kimono and curl papers and sought within her breast for the dictates of her heart and within her head for the commands of her common sense.

The problem that faced her was indeed perplexing. Her heart bade her take Magnus; but her common sense cried loudly and urgently for Abe, for, though Love is sublime, to Angeline, who viewed life mainly from across a counter, it was equally as patent that money is necessary; while sublimity, like diamond tiaras and horses that jingle when they trot, and silk underskirts and lorgnettes, though greatly to be desired, can better be dispensed with than can beef stew and "sinkers" and a folding bed that looks like a piano, and often feels like one.

Now, Magnus was big and burly and kind-hearted and generous, but he was improvident and wore such impossible striped shirts; furthermore, he was only a shipping clerk and received but ten dollars a week. Abe, on the other hand, made fifteen dollars for his energetic and persuasive dispensation of "gent's underwear," and likewise had an uncle who was a floorwalker in the same department, which is almost as good as having an interest in the firm, since it precludes all possibility of discharge. And Abe was very economical—"stingy," Ellen O'Brien said—and had a most luxuriant and shiny black mustache through which a gold tooth flickered attractively; and, too, he dressed so "swell," in marvelously open-work hose and the most inordinate collars.

Again, to offset these latter attractions, there was between Angeline and Magnus a bond of nativity, for Magnus' father had come from the County Kerry, where Angeline's mother still was.

It was this bond that would seem so potent a factor for the success of Magnus, together with the unconscious influence of the far-away mother, that eventually decided against him. For Mrs. Delaney was old and feeble and lived ever on the verge of eviction. She constantly wrote the most appealing and indecipherable letters to her daughter, who, in consequence, each month denied herself many things

that she might send to the little old woman in the County Kerry some five dollars with which to conjure the wolf, in the shape of the landlord, from the door.

Now, Angeline recognized that post-nuptial conditions with Magnus would mean that if she could get at him before he and his weekly envelope had time to part, she could have all that he possessed. But there was ever that problematical "if." Abe, she knew, would always have money and she trusted to her abilities to get from him enough for herself and her mother. Ellen O'Brien declared that Angeline would have to give Abe ether in order to separate him from enough to buy an ice-cream soda; but Ellen was always cynical and knew nothing of love.

Understand me, Angeline was not by nature mercenary or scheming, but one finds it hard these days to support one's self and pay, too, the board of Romance on six dollars a week. The viewpoint of life and its mysteries that one gets from a department store is not the æsthetic or the poetic; and this had been Angeline's ever since she had been old enough to carry a bundle and answer to the compelling call of "Cash!" It is an atmosphere in which Romance, as well as children, grow but stuntedly.

And so, as the sharp clatter of thick dishes and plate glass tumblers crept under the dirty double panes of the open window, fighting for admission with the odor of boiled cabbage and the quavering complaints of dissolute cats, the gods of Policy hounded those of Love from the little fourth floor rear, and returned supreme. Angeline's mind was made up.

It is not wise, however, to reject one suitor until you are quite certain that the one whom you intend to accept has not changed his mind; for when one earns but six dollars for sixty hours of labor, one cannot afford the luxury of breach of promise suits. Thus Angeline waited until she had received from the fortunate Abe many additional protestations of lifelong devotion, and, as collateral evidence of good faith, two rings. The first was a "jes' grand" diamond—the fact that it was a chip did not disconcert Angeline in the slightest; the second was a silver seal—sterling, too!—and on it was a crest which,

her *fiance* assured her, had been granted his great-great-grandfather by Napoleon Bonaparte for distinguished valor at the Battle of Bunker Hill.

Angeline had accepted it with gratitude and awe. On looking closely she saw that certain words beneath the coat of arms had been strangely scratched and disfigured—presumably at the above mentioned battle—and so how was she to know that the motto of the ancient house of Levy had been "Souvenir of the Buffalo Exposition?"

Having, then, these strong and unquestionable proofs of devotion, Angeline had decided to cut the cord from the end of which still dangled the doomed Magnus; and the cutting had been accomplished one evening when Magnus had called while Abe was detained at the store by the semi-annual taking account of stock.

Magnus had removed his coat as the evening was warm, and, when she entered, was seated on the uneven seat of the hair-cloth sofa, marked with brown rings where the ambitious springs vainly tried to thrust their heads through into the doubtful atmosphere of the parlor.

As Angeline gazed at his bulky form and good-natured, though hardly classic, features, the cutting became no easy task, and several times she felt her resolution faltering wofully. But the department-store-bred gods rallied nobly to her assistance.

Magnus put his arm about her waist and drew her down beside him on the sofa.

"Well, Angy," he said, "w'at's de answer?"

The girl hesitated and her brown eyes gazed a bit uncertainly at the diminutive grate and its sacred burden of inviolate coal that reposed beneath the marble mantel.

She did not reply for some moments. And then she said, slowly, "I like you, Magnus." And then she added, wistfully, "An' I'd like ter marry yer, but it ain't no go."

The smile of tender confidence suddenly vanished from Magnus' face. His arm dropped from her waist.

"W'y not?" he asked, simply.

There was another pause. Then An-

geline said, abruptly, "I'm goin' ter marry Abe Levy."

Magnus' jaw dropped, and then it squared suddenly.

"She t'rows me down fer him," he remarked, apparently to the fireplace.

Angeline gazed at him, timidly. But he did not look at her.

"She t'rows me down fer him," repeated Magnus. "W'at d'yer t'ink o' dat?"

Still Angeline was silent. And now she did not dare to look at him, for the gods of Policy had timidly retreated to the door and any moment might see their utter rout.

But Magnus did not recognize the crucial moment, the pregnant instant, when by a sudden onslaught, victory might be wrested from defeat. With him, as with many a better man, his chance came, waited, and then went, unseen and unknown. He arose and put his arms slowly into the sleeves of his coat. Then, with a heavy hitch, he drew it over his big shoulders.

"She t'rows me down fer dat Abe Levy," he said, this time to the hat tree in the hall; and then, as he descended the front steps, she heard him ask again: "Now, w'at d'yer t'ink o' dat?"

Although Angeline had sold many shirt-waists that day, and although the temperature in the store had been somewhere over ninety, the air very vitiated, and she very tired, she did not sleep very well that night. She was not so positive as she had been on the night before that the rejection of Magnus was the right thing to be done. Her heart did not seem quite so satisfied as she had thought it would. And she lay long awake in her little, hot room thinking of Magnus and the expression on his face as he had left her, and listening to the quavering wails of the dissolute and apparently tireless cats outside her window. But she felt that her decision was irrevocable. In the end, however, she resolved to accord to Magnus the only balm in her power.

She saw him next day, as they were leaving the store.

"Magnus!" she called, timorously.

He stopped and turned.

She hesitated. "I want you to be best man," she said at length, suddenly.

Magnus was lighting a cigaret.

"It's goin' ter be a dead swell choich weddin'," she urged. "Will yer?"

"Sure," responded Magnus, calmly.

"Abe was keen fer Louie Rubenstein, because he owns a dress suit," continued Angeline. "But Louie goes ter the synagogue, while Abe doesn't. An' I stood out strong fer you, Magnus, whose folks is Protestants, like mine, an' I told him that you was a sport an' a genteel dresser an' would hire the glad clo'es fer the 'casion."

"Sure, I will," again vouchsafed Magnus, with tranquil assurance. "I ain't no cheap guy."

Angeline extended her hand. "Thanks, Magnus," she said, "I always said you was a good sport. Come around an' see me some time. I'm goin' ter bed early ter-night. Didn't sleep much last night." She flushed a little and then explained quickly, "It was so hot, y'know."

Magnus himself had not slept much of the night before, either. He had gone down on Third avenue and played pool until very late. Then he had returned to his room and had done much thinking, for Magnus had the blood of Irish kings in his veins, you know, and fighting Irish kings, too; and when Magnus wanted a thing, though he sometimes did not get it, it was not for lack of effort on his part. And he wanted Angeline, and he felt that there must be something that he didn't understand in his being "t'rown down fer dat Abe Levy."

But his thinking evolved nothing. So, when seven o'clock came, he washed his face and hands, put on a clean collar and started out for breakfast and work. The next night he thought some more; and the next.

Now Magnus, you must know, had all the Irish-American aptitude for politics, and was already beginning to be a recognized factor in ward affairs. And so, whenever he wanted anything, like all politicians, his first thought of the means to the end in view, was politics. This, a matter of fact, had been Magnus' primary idea in his *affaire de coeur*, the application was what puzzled him. But the third night solved the problem.

Thus it was that, on the fourth night,

he went down on Fourteenth street and stood in front of Tammany Hall until at last there appeared the man whom Magnus wished to see. This strange man was a low-browed person with a low-crowned hat and a large, shining stone in his shirt bosom. He smoked a big, black cigar that stuck up through one side of his red mustache at a most acute angle. And he talked with the other side of his mouth, so as not to disturb the repose of the cigar.

Magnus and the low-browed gentleman straightway adjourned to a saloon on the corner. After about an hour of conference, Magnus said, "See?" and the low-browed man said, "Sure." Then the low-browed man pointed at Magnus with his thumb and said something about "de boss," and "a good job," and "fer youse," and "soon," and Magnus went home and, what is more, slept so happily and contentedly that he was half an hour late to work next morning.

The best man stood in the minister's study, awaiting the arrival of the groom. He had spared neither pains nor expense in his costume, and his broad expanse of shirt bosom, with its two huge studs of Guatamalan diamonds—a Sixth avenue synonym for glass—was surmounted by a four-inch palisade of stiff and shiny starched collar that seriously discommoded his ears and forced him to hold his head much after the fashion of an over-checked horse. A thin tie of gleaming red, knotted in a four-in-hand, wound around the base of his collar and lost its ends in the opening of the white bosom. His coat clung to him affectionately. The sleeves showed a tendency to crawl above his striped cuffs, and the tails reached but midway between thigh and knee, while the trousers had evidently been made for a man of much less determined growth than their present wearer. But one must be oblivious to many things when one hires a dress suit.

The best man took out his watch and, holding it high in the air, where his collar did not interfere with his vision, gazed at the dial. It was already eight o'clock, the time set for the ceremony, and the bridegroom had not come yet.

The best man inserted his fingers be-



tween his collar and his neck and swore softly and excitedly. His face wore an expression of nervous expectation, intermingled with hope, fear, and sundry other emotions difficult to analyze.

A quarter of an hour passed.

The organist, impatient at the unexplained delay, came down from the loft to inquire in strident tones and in language not altogether proper for a sanctuary, as to the cause; for the organist was running for office and was due to make a great many vain promises in the back room of a near-by saloon at eight thirty.

Meanwhile, the bride, clad in a gown of glowing white, that looked like satin and was much more durable, was approaching a condition of violent hysterics in the south entry.

Often had she read of trusting maids deserted at the altar on the eve of the ceremony. She had seen it in red ink on the front page of the evening paper—she could see it now:

BEAUTIFUL SOCIETY BELLE DESERTED AT  
ALTAR BY PROMINENT AND WEALTHY  
YOUNG CLUBMAN!

And in red ink, too! It was too awful! She bit nervously at the blue and yellow fan that she held in her gloved hand.

Ellen O'Brien, to whom had been accorded the honor—and expense—of attending the bride, kicked savagely at the train of her muslin gown as it interfered with her feet in her excited promenade of the narrow entry.

"I always said that Abe Levy was a quitter," she remarked, caustically. "The idea of his gettin' us down here an' then sneakin' off an' spoilin' the whole show! An' this dress set me back three ninety-nine an' trimmin's! Jes' wait till I ketch him, that's all!"

The door swung open and the best man entered.

"It looks like it was all off, goils," he remarked. "Game called an' no rain checks."

The bride shrieked hysterically.

"Tough luck, Angy," continued the best man. "Youse is sure up against it." He put his arm about her consolingly and she buried her head on his shoulder and gave vent to her more or less pent-up emotions. Great, scalding tears fell upon the hired

dress suit and made big, dull blotches on the polished shirt bosom.

Magnus held the artificial orange blossoms away from his elevated mouth so that they would not interfere with his conversation.

"If youse had only picked me fer de winner, Angy," he said, "dis show wouldn't 'a' ben no fizzle like it is. I keeps my dates, I does," he added, with an air of conscious rectitude.

The bride-elect moved her head to a more comfortable position and continued to sob. The maid of honor still walked energetically up and down her circumscribed promenade, revengefully remarking: "Jes' wait till I ketch him, that's all," and, in the corner, Katie O'Shaugnessy and Agatha Dolan, the bridesmaids, engaged in an animated conversation about the mental, moral, and physical qualities of the absent groom that could, by no possible stretch of the imagination, be considered as flattering.

Meanwhile, never in his life had the groom had such a time in getting anywhere as to his wedding. The ceremony was to take place at eight, and he had left his boarding house at seven—ample time, he thought, to get to the church and to allow himself a half hour before the ceremony.

As he turned into Fourth avenue, a man had jostled against him just as he was passing an ash barrel. The man who, the groom observed, was a low-browed man in a low-crowned hat, had jostled against him so hard that the groom and the ash barrel sought the gutter together, much to the disarrangement of both.

His dress suit rendered temporarily valueless by this unforeseen accident, the groom perforce returned to his boarding place, where he reclothed himself in a blue serge with a white vest which, though it affronted his ideas of the conventional and the correct, was cheaper than hiring another dress suit.

As he neared the corner for the second time, he saw the low-browed man in earnest conversation with a white wing across the street. The low-browed man crossed over; and, notwithstanding his haste,



so did the groom. But just as he reached the curb, the white wing, who was skillfully balancing a scoopful of dirt and water, made an execrable shot at his barrow and the contents of the scoop struck the groom in the back.

Again the groom returned to his boarding place. This time he arrayed himself in a pale gray suit and tan shoes, which was not at all *de rigueur*, but which was his available best. It was now quarter of eight.

He hurried again toward Fourth avenue, and this time reached it without accident. As he crossed to the trolley tracks, he saw the low-browed man standing on the corner and anxiously puffing on his sky-pointing cigar. The groom boarded the car. So did the low-browed man. But, while the groom sought the smoker's seat, the low-browed man went up forward and, over the steel gate, held converse with the motorman.

This the groom casually noticed and thought strange, for there is an especial printed injunction against such action; then it occurred to the groom, though he attached no significance to it at the time, that the low-browed man was probably a friend of the motorman—might even have worked on the road at some previous date; and so, indeed, he had before he took up politics, and other things.

The car started; the groom paid his fare and heaved a sigh of deep relief. Then the car stopped for a passenger. When it started again, it started with a jump. There was a grinding of wheels, a coughing explosion, and a curl of blue, malodorous smoke wafted up from beneath the forward seats.

The motorman slowly opened the iron gates that kept him inviolate from the public, and still more slowly dismounted from the car. The conductor sauntered forward and joined him, and for several moments they conversed with their heads close together. The low-browed man seemed to take a great interest in matters, too, for he also dismounted and joined the conference.

"What's the matter?" called the groom, nervously.

The conductor turned slowly. His eyes rested on the groom and he answered, tranquilly:

"Blown out a fuse."

"How long will it take ter fix it?" queried the groom.

"'Bout a minnit," answered the conductor, nonchalantly.

It was a very long minute, for fully six hundred seconds had passed, by the groom's nickel-plated watch, ere the motorman again mounted the platform and put the car in motion.

For four more blocks they sped along swiftly, and the groom again heaved a heartfelt sigh of gratitude. The car stopped for an old woman with a small baby and a large bundle. It jumped again in starting, and once more came the sharp coughing explosion, and again the blue smoke curled up about the seats. The car again stopped suddenly. This was at eight o'clock.

With the greatest deliberation, the motorman descended from the front platform, while the conductor, with the swiftness of a pall bearer at a funeral, joined him. The groom leaned excitedly and anxiously out of the side of the car.

"What's the matter now?" he asked of the conductor, as that official passed him in his leisurely course to the front of the car.

"'Nudder fuse," answered the conductor, tersely, and he and the motorman, assisted by the low-browed gentleman, again gathered by the side of the car and fixed and mended, and mended and fixed, while the passengers sat in impotent impatience and some cursed the road and some the motorman. But nobody cursed the low-browed man.

Five minutes past eight found the groom in a state of mind bordering on the murderous, or the extravagant. At ten minutes past he actually threw away a cigaret that was but half smoked. At quarter past he almost called a cab. He had even opened his mouth to do so when he suddenly remembered that a cab would cost a dollar and a half; and he closed his lips, quickly and firmly. A dollar and a half is worthy of much consideration when you have had to buy an engagement ring, and a wedding ring, and hire a church, and pay a minister and an organist. And surely his wife-to-be could never in her life earn a dollar and a half quicker or easier than

by waiting a half an hour, or even a trifle more.

And so the groom left the trolley and, walking over to Third avenue, took the elevated. The low-browed man gazed at his disappearing form, tilted his cigar to a more acute angle, and sought a saloon with the air of one who congratulates himself upon a duty well performed.

When the groom at length reached the church, he found the usual crowd of wedding watchers. But why were they craning their necks and elbowing one another so? And why was he told loudly and very disrespectfully to go to a very warm place, where all hope is to be left behind, merely because he was trying to get into his own wedding? And why did a small boy, who was gazing between the legs of the man in front just then exclaim shrilly, "Gee! Ain't she a boid!"

He pushed his way through the gaping throng and at last gained the door. There he was met by the janitor with a bill for the rental of the church; and the organist, who was now late for his engagement at the near-by saloon, and hence in no very amiable mood, called him a big stiff and accused him of "tryin' ter skip out an' skin him."

Helplessly confused, the groom gazed

about him. He didn't understand. Helplessly he twisted his shiny black mustache. But still he didn't understand.

Then, suddenly, his eyes fell upon a hack, decorated with white ribbons and surrounded by a crowd of not too tastefully clad young people whom he recognized as those whose names he and Angeline had so painstakingly jotted down upon the long strip of brown paper that told who was who in the matter of their wedding. And through the window of the hack projected the artificial orange blossoms of Angeline and the brick-red mustache of the descendant of Irish kings. Then he did understand.

As the hack drove joyously away, followed by a great deal of rice and several large and much-worn shoes, Abe Levy stood on the church steps in silence. At length, when the crowd had dispersed and the janitor had extinguished the lights and locked the church doors, and the organist had gone to make his vain and belated promises in the back room of the near-by saloon, he slowly descended the steps. And, as he turned into Fourth avenue and stood, waiting for a trolley car, he observed, slowly and sadly:

"An' he done it wit' my ring, too!"

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## Kittle Cattle

BY JULIA TRUITT BISHOP

Even a casual observer might have noticed that there was something unusual in Mrs. Ephraim Dunham's manner as she poured the tea; and long experience had made Ephraim anything but a casual observer. He braced himself, now—mentally—for the withered little old woman at the head of the table was full of surprises; and forty years of married life had given Ephraim his pet axiom, which ran in this wise: "The' ain't no man livin' can tell what a woman's goin' to say or do."

"Been a visitin' in town?" he threw out as a feeler, for Mrs. Dunham had on her "best dress," which she called her "black

alipaca," and which had begun to take on a rusty brown some ten years before.

"Yes—I dropped up to Mis' Peterses," she returned noncommittally. "All the church people was there. We was makin' some new sheets an' things for the pars'nage, an' we quilted 'em two new quilts. The way that las' preacher's fam'ly went through them bed clothes was a sin an' a shame. They must 'a' took 'em to walk on; they never could 'a' ragged 'em out like that any other way. An' Mis' Peters says she's morally shore the beds is buggy. We've got to meet at the pars'nage for a day's cleanin', Wednesday. The new preacher's goin' to move in Sat'day."



DRAWN BY HOWARD HEATH

"There was something unusual in Mrs. Ephraim Dunham's manner."

There was a look on Mrs. Dunham's face that was quite foreign to bed clothes and such humdrum gear. She had given no hint, as yet, of the real heart of the matter.

"He is, hey?" said Ephraim, on the watch.

"With his wife, of course," mentioned Mrs. Dunham, in the most casual way. "They haven't been married very long. Dan'l Young seen her in the city about a month ago, an' he says she dresses awful uppity an' pernickity."

Ephraim thought he saw light. She disapproved of the preacher's wife. He expressed himself at large.

"She'll have ter git over that, here," he said severely. "People that perfesses religion ain't got no business trickin' themselves out in gold an' silver an' costly 'parel."

"But it's people's duty to dress themselves as neat as they can," Mrs. Dunham hastened to add. "An' ever'body is fixin' up ag'in' the time he preaches his first sermon here, next Sunday two weeks. Ma' Liza Lee is havin' a dress made, a blue dress; she needed it, goodness knows. An' Mis' Peters is trimmin' her bonnet over in lavender, though goodness knows, whoever told 'Mandy Peters that she could wear lavender! An' Em'line Jones won't

tell what she's goin' to git; but Ephr'im, it's plum shore to be a dress, an' she ain't been wearin' that one a day over five year!"

"No wonder Bill Jones can't save nothin'!" said Ephraim, virtuously.

"An', Ephr'im, I want a new black dress!"

The bolt had fallen, so nearly out of the blue that Ephraim gasped. It did not take him long to recover himself, however, for Ephraim's wits were nimble enough when the battle was once joined.

"I might 'a' knowed that was it!" he cried, with irritation. "Women is jes' like sheep—ef one jumps in the ditch, all the res' is boun' to lan' in the same ditch, or they ain't happy. Great Scott, Samantha! New black dress! Ye might at leas' wait till the ol' one's wore out. The' ain't a hole in it, fur as I can see."

"This dress has been a disgrace for more 'n nine year," said Samantha, with spirit; (cry havoc! and let the war-dogs loose!) "Mis' Peters says to me this very day: 'That's been a mighty good piece of alipaca, Mis' Dunham; I've wore out two or three dresses sence you got that one!'"

"Mis' Peters is a' ol' cat," remarked Ephraim.

"An' Em'line Jones says, 'Yes, that was a good piece of alipaca—in its day!'"

"Em'line Jones is another cat," Ephraim retorted grimly. "'Tain't no use, Samantha. I can't be fool-in' away money on black dresses when you don't need 'em no more'n a chicken needs two heads."

Samantha Dunham looked down at the old dress, and smoothed its rusty skirt with a knotted, browned, work-hardened hand.

"I want a new black dress," she said, not as a request, but merely stating a fact. "This one's been shabby for years an' years.

You could 'a' seen that for yourself if you hadn't been so wrapped up in buyin' an' sellin' cattle an' addin' on more lan' ever' year. An' that bonnet; I got the shape down at Miss Ann Perk's when she use' to keep the little milliner's store opposite the courthouse. That was twenty-two year ago las' summer. Ever' oncet in awhile I wash the ribbon in coffee an' press it out an' tack it back on ag'in, but it's the same ol' shape an' the same ol' bonnet. The las' time I went to town I heerd some girls say that ol' bonnet looked like it come out of the ark, an' I reckon it does, Ephr'im, only I don't believe none o' Noah's women-folks would 'a' wore that bonnet when it was new—much less now."



DRAWN BY HOWARD HEATH

"'I want a new black dress,' said Samantha."

"An' now it's the bonnet!" retorted Ephraim bitterly. "Land o' mercy, Samantha, what do you want to go 'roun' for, at your time o' life, tagged out in fin'ry?"

"A woman never gits so old but that she likes to look nice," said Samantha firmly. "An' no matter what her age is, if she knows she's shabby an' down at the heel she can't think a good thought; she can't do it! An' I want a new black dress, Ephr'im."

Mr. Dunham arose from the table precipitately.

"My lan', Samantha, ain't you never goin' to let up on that black dress?" he snapped. "Ye might as well, for you ain't goin' to get it, I tell ye that right now!"

And he went to bed in high dudgeon, leaving Samantha to put away the "alipaca," don her house-dress and wash the dishes. Long before her task was finished she and the dress were forgotten, while Ephraim lent himself to unpoetic slumber. He came blithely to the table next morning, and drank his coffee with relish.

"I dun no' but what I like breakfas' better than any meal o' the day," he said, basking in the warmth and comfort. "You are a captain when it comes to making coffee, Samantha!"

"I want a new black dress," said Samantha, looking at him across the cups.

"My lan'!" ejaculated Ephraim irritably, and hastened off to the wintry fields, where, like the politician, he was looking after his fences before the spring planting should begin.

When the day is rather busy, one has time to forget little unpleasantnesses. At the table, that evening, Ephraim helped himself to another biscuit with epicurean delight.

"I don't know anybody that can come anywhere a-nigh you makin' biscuits, Samantha," he said. "I was speakin' o' your biscuits to ol' man Bolivar Sunday—"

"I want a new black dress," said Samantha.

It was sunrise, next morning, and the chickens were fluttering down out of the big fowl house, cackling and crowing and

taking a warm chickenly interest in the pan of corn Ephraim carried. Mrs. Dunham looked on from the kitchen door.

"I tell ye, these chickens is lookin' fine this year," said Ephraim with much satisfaction. "You've done mighty well with 'em, Samantha. The Naborses' chickens is got cholery, or somethin'—all dyin' off—but I don't b'lieve 'you've had a sick one—"

"I want a new black dress," said Samantha.

"Anything else you want?" asked Ephraim, setting the pan down on the ground, where it immediately disappeared in a tidal wave of chickens. "How'd you like a few diamon's, or a gol' watch, or a trip to New York? How'd you fancy a weddin' tower, Samantha? Anything you don't happen to see, jes' ask for it!"

"I want a new black dress," said Samantha.

"Great fish-hooks!" ejaculated Ephraim, and went off to work without waiting for breakfast.

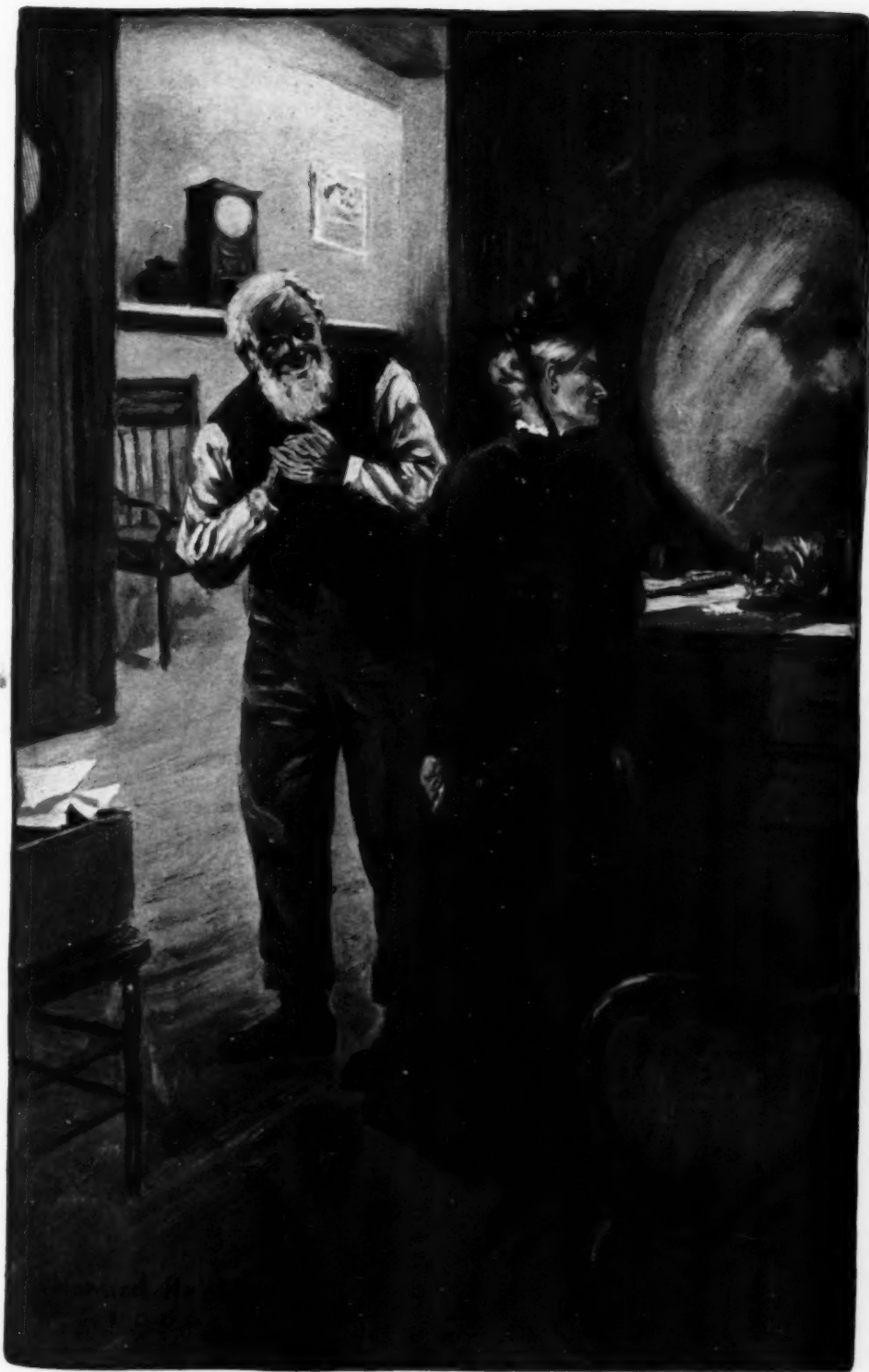
He regretted this afterward, when he came to think of it, because he remembered then that it was Wednesday, and his wife would be gone all day, helping the other women clean up the parsonage. This meant that there would be no hot dinner at home, but merely such "cold things" as he could find on the pantry shelves. Long before noontime, hunger and the absence of his customary cup of morning coffee had wrought havoc with Ephraim's nerves, and the cold collation of noon, gulped hastily because he was alone, had merely added to his regrets.

"I b'lieve I've got a case o' jumpin' fantods," he remarked to himself, at mid-afternoon, when he abandoned his work, and, leaning pensively on the fence, spat with unerring aim at a clod in the middle of the road. Dr. Jasper's new boy, galloping madly southward, with elbows flopping, drew rein for a moment to watch this feat with envious eyes.

"Hit 'er square!" he said, and was flopping on again when Ephraim called after him:

"Hello, sonny! What's yer hurry?"





DRAWN BY HOWARD HEATH

"Say, Samanthy, may I set on the fence tomorrer an' see you go by?"

"Goin'—down—to—Adamses'—aft'—Doc.—Jasper!" was jerked out of the boy, his head over his shoulder.

"Who's sick?" yelled Ephraim.

"Nobody sick—feller in ortermobile run over ol' woman—up front—pars'nage!" screamed the boy, half turned in the saddle.

"Who was she?" Ephraim held his hands on either side of his mouth and sent a trumpet call down the road.

"Dunno—ol' woman—black dress—" were the only words that floated back to him.

Running, stumbling, half-falling, bruising himself against stumps, Ephraim found his way across a million-mile stretch made up of the field and a piece of the road that led towards town. Gasping sobs shook his frame, and his face was wet as he ran, and his feet could not keep pace with his busy thoughts. Poor, tired, worn-out Samantha—worn out with hard work that never stopped, and never had a vacation, and never had any fun or amusement—nothing but work, work, for forty years—and he had meant ever since they were married to take her off on a trip, some time—and now it was too late—too late—

Ephraim turned out of the road into a "short cut" through the woods, and went stumbling and gasping blindly on, until suddenly he caught at a tree for support. For there, coming down the little trail through the woods, with the sunlight and shadow playing over her gray hair, was a withered old woman in a rusty black dress. She was bareheaded, and carrying the slat-sunbonnet on her arm; and she sang as she came, in a faint little old voice, something about how firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in His excellent word.

She had not seen Ephraim, and was startled when he appeared before her, drawing both sleeves, one after the other across his face.

"I've been a-hurryin'—till I got overheated," he explained, in the slanting light of the January sun. "I thought—I'd go up to town an'—an' come back with ye, Samantha—but 'long as I met you—I won't go, now."

"We all quit early," said Samantha in

mild explanation. "Mis' Peters come mighty nigh gittin' killed by one o' these foolish ortermobiles; she's bruised up considerable, an' we put off finishin' up till tomorrer."

They walked along, side by side. Ephraim glanced at her out of the corner of his eyes in deep embarrassment; but he said not a word until he had set foot on the doorstep at home.

"Samanthy," he said haltingly; "I don't keer if ye git that new black dress, after all."

Samantha looked at him, laughing, and ever so many of the years had dropped from her face.

"I'm mighty glad ye come over, Ephraim," she said. "I got the dress that first day, before I spoke to you about it, an' Lucy Ann Berrens is makin' it, an' she's goin' to make me a new bonnet, too, an' I'll be as fine as a fiddle when the preacher's wife comes. I drew the money out o' the bank. The cashier said he knowed it 'ud be all right, knowin' both of us as long as he has."

She left Ephraim sitting alone in the gallery rocker, where he had fallen, and for a long time there was silence, and then she heard a chuckle, and after awhile a roar of laughter, with much slapping of knees.

"I might 'a' knowed that!" he said aloud, with the delight of discovery.

The new dress and the new bonnet came home and were tried on by Samantha blushing, while Ephraim walked around and around her, rubbing his hands as he asked:

"Say, Samantha, may I set on the fence tomorrer an' see you go by?"

He could see, now, how her step lightened, how her back straightened, how proudly she held her head. Truly, it did make a difference!

While she was dressing, next morning, he did his best not to shame her; blacking a long-unblacked pair of shoes, and shaving himself with frightful facial contortions at the little mirror by the kitchen window. He curried and brushed the horses, too, and waited expectantly beside the wagon for her to come.

And when she came running out presently—absolutely running, at her

time of life—he stared at her aghast.

“Why, Samantha,” he faltered; “where’s the new fixin’s?”

“I thought I’d wear the old ones today—I’m more use’ to them,” she said, as she climbed nimbly into the wagon.

“Come on, Ephraim, or we’ll be late.”

“But I thought—you thought—you said—” murmured Ephraim, choking.

“I know I did,” replied Samantha gaily. “But I don’t mind wearin’ the

ol’ clothes, as long I know I’ve got them new ones hangin’ up in the closet. Oh, I feel like a dif’rent somebody. An’ I’ll wear the new ones—soon as I git use’ to ’em.”

Ephraim sat motionless, the reins in his hands, until the horses had trotted half-way to town. Then he suddenly straightened up.

“The’ can’t no man tell a thing about ’em!” he said with fervor. “Not a blessed thing!”

## When Woman Intervenes

BY A. M. CHISHOLM

“Women,” said the old fisherman, “are the ruination of a lot; they hurt a man in his pride, spoil his taste for liquor, and sour him on his chums. Marriage is the beginnin’ of the end of all good-fellowship and leads to ill health and worry. I ain’t never married, myself, bein’, as you might say, uneasy when women is around. Not but what I might have married, and married well, scores of times, for when I was a young chap the girls thought a heap of me, and I could have had my pick of the town, a’most. Bein’ partic’lar an’ hard to suit I kept to weather of all she-craft for fear one of ’em might take a sudden notion to blanket me, and, keepin’ there, I saw my chums, one after the other, strike their colors to privateerin’ women of different rigs. Some made a fight for it, and some jest nat’rally laid down an’ quit when the woman ranged up alongside and hailed as if she meant business. Stayin’ single, I have my health, an’ can take my liquor when I please.”

“What will you have now?” asked the listener.

“Hey? Oh, I never take nothin’ strong in the mornin’; just a drop o’ gin ’ll do. You try gin. You’ll ruin your lower hold with that there mis’able, fizzy mineral water. There’s swamps full of it back of the sandhills; it kills the frogs, and a frog’s insides is copper sheathed alongside a man’s. Now gin is mild, and a drink of it don’t get lonesome when it’s stowed, the way hard liquor does.

Old Sam Eldridge, that lived to be ninety-eight, he never took nothin’ but gin before breakfast.

“‘I attribit my long life,’ says he to me, ‘to my temperate habits and the even temper that comes of havin’ no women folks to disturb. I never take rum before noon, and I chaw only nat’ral leaf. Shun adulterations,’ he says; ‘liquor an’ tobacco ain’t what they used to be; you can’t depend on the molasses used in both now-a-days. As for women, except for cookin’ and such-like, what’s the good of ’em to a grown man? And at that, I never knowed a woman could broil a steak or plank a fish ekal to a man. Women is well enough for children and boys, but when a man comes to have good sense he lets ’em alone.’

“Old Sam cert’nly was a judge of liquor and tobacco, though I don’t go as far as him about women. What I say is, that a woman takes a man as is quiet and contented in the station of life he was called to, as the prayer book says, and marries him, and breaks up his friendships and comforts, and not bein’ his own boss nat’rally his pride suffers. Do I know a instance? Of course I do, dozens of ’em.

“There was Joe Kennedy, for one. Joe was one of the boys, from the time he got into pants, an’ no bigger devil ever stepped. He had a lot of friends among the men, and half a dozen partic’lar chums, the partic’larest of ’em bein’ Pete Hoover. Joe was what you might call

proud of bein' a man, and his own boss, and did what he blame' pleased and often more, just to show that he could do it and that there was no collar to him, let alone a string. Pete did the same, and they used to walk around with their heads held high, feelin' big around the chest, and laughin' at such of the boys as was married and had to slip their moorings early in the evenin', account o' havin' to report to their wives, or help dock their kids for the night.

"Where are you off to?" says Joe to Ezra Coffin, one night. They was sittin' in this room, and it was only the third drink for Joe an' the second one for Ezra, but he had looked at his watch and got up to go.

"Goin' home," says Ezra, but standin' still.

"Why?" asks Joe, with a wink at the crowd.

"Well," says Ezra, "I ain't feelin' extra, and I think a sleep is what I need."

"Another drink will do you more good," says Joe. "Sit down and have one."

"No," says Ezra, "I must be goin'; my wife worries if I'm out late."

"Late!" says Joe. "Here it is the dawn of the evenin' and plenty doin'. Before I'd be tied up to a woman's draw strings!" he says.

"So Ezra sat down and had a couple more, by which time he clean forgot about goin' home, and when he did go it was because the house closed up, and he went up street singin' 'The Wreck of the *Ella Ross*,' fit to wake the dead, and about four notes too high, holdin' onto each one of 'em as if they was spiked into his throat.

"I happened along in his wake, not joinin' company because he was in a condition to be dangerous to other shippin', though able to navigate by himself in a fairway. When we come to his house it was all dark, and he talked to himself at the gate about the carelessness of the harbor people, not lookin' after the lights. Then he went up the path, singin':

"The Cap'n called the passengers, an' thus to them did say,

"By cruel chance, in sight of port, our ship is cast away.

"Let each man buckle on a belt, all for to save his life,

"But first let each, on bended knees, pray for his waitin' wife."

"With that he tripped on the steps and fell, just at the part of the song where the *Ella Ross*' masts ought to go, and she begin to break up.

"I heard a window open, and his wife say:

"Is that you, Ezra Coffin?"

"Yes," says Ezra, speakin' thick because of the liquor and because he had jammed his teeth on the steps.

"What do you mean by comin' home at this time of night and makin' such a noise?" says his wife.

"Harbor lightsh out; fouled a hulk in the fairway; complain to the Shippin' Board," says Ezra.

"You're drunk!" says his wife.

"Not 'tall. Head wind an' cross seas; in ballast an' ridin' light—maksh me roll," says Ezra.

"I'll make you roll!" says Mrs. Coffin, closin' down the window.

"Then I went on, not wishin' to intrude on Ezra's home life, an' the excitement bein' about over anyway for me, though just beginnin' for him.

"Ezra didn't show up at the 'Fisherman's Rest' for a long time, and Joe joshed him something scandalous for bein' under his wife's thumb and not havin' a mind of his own, and not bein' boss in his own house. Ezra took it like a lamb, and all he said to Joe was: 'You wait; you've got plenty comin' your way.'

"Huh!" says Joe, "I'll not let no woman say where I go nor what time I have to come home. Woman is the weaker vessel," he says, stickin' out his chest an' shovin' his hands in his trousers pockets, jinglin' some loose coin. "If a man is firm with 'em at the start it's all right, but if he ain't they take advantage of his good nature. There's everything in the management of a woman an' the sailin' of a crank craft," he says.

"But Ezra only says: 'You wait,' and stuck to his house like a barnacle to a foul bottom.

"Joe kept on chumming with Pete Hoover, havin' his fun with the girls, same as ever, and takin' his liquor when he wanted it. After a while, as will happen, he got the girls sifted out till there was only



one or two he went with, and from that it narrowed down to one—Katy Fuljames, a little, red-headed blonde, with snappy blue eyes and a tongue that was amusin' to a single man. Joe could a'most have stowed her away in his coat pocket, and he liked to tell Pete Hoover the sharp things she said about people—includin' Pete.

"Pete wasn't so well pleased, because what she said had a rasp to it, and, meetin' her one day, he made a remark about white horses that set her—against—him. She told Joe that Pete had been—rude—to—her. Then Joe gets after Pete.

"'What you been sayin' about Miss Fuljames?' he says to him. They had always spoke of her as 'Katy' afore that.

"'Nothin' that I know of,' says Pete. 'Why?'

"'She says you insulted her,' says Joe.

"'In what way?' asks Pete.

"'You said something about her hair bein' red,' says Joe.

"'Well, it is; it's the color of a port sidelight,' says Pete.

"'And white horses,' says Joe. 'I don't want no more of them nasty, personal remarks made, Pete Hoover.'

"'All right, if she's so touchy about the hand-out Nature give her,' says Pete. 'Only she shouldn't say so much about other folks if she don't want some herself; she's got the devil of a tongue, and that's a fact. And again,' he says, 'what business is it of yours, anyway, I'd like to know?'

"'I'm goin' to marry her,' says Joe, lookin' rather foolish as he said it.

"'You are!' says Pete. 'Then I've got no more to say, only that red is a danger signal, the world over. This is so sudden. You don't have to speak, and anything you may say will be used against you. Still, it's my duty to hear you speak in your own defence. Speak up! Will you be tried by me or a jury?'

"'Oh, all right, have your fun,' says Joe, but pretty red in the face. 'A man must get married some time, and she's a girl I've knowed for a good while—a good, bright, lively girl,' he says.

"'Bright enough,' says Pete. 'Very bright, indeed—bright sorrel.'

"'Pete,' says Joe, 'you'll stop sayin' things about the color of my future wife's

hair; if she was a whole Orange procession it's nothing to you. And I take it unfriendly,' says he, complainin' like, 'that you shouldn't congratulate me, as is proper under these here circumstances.'

"'Of course I congratulate you,' says Pete, stoppin' his jollyin' when he saw Joe was beginnin' to feel hurt; 'Katy's a fine, lively girl, and clever as she can be. I s'pose we must all get married some time, as you say, but seein' it means I lose a chum you can't expect me to feel extra joyful over your good luck, now can you?'

"'It won't make no difference between us,' says Joe. 'I'll keep my friends after I'm married, the same as they was before.'

"'Not you,' says Pete. 'You won't be let. Your wife won't like me, an' she'll see to it that you don't. You'll stay indoors of a evening and go to church of a Sunday like a good boy, an' maybe of a holiday or a christening you'll have one glass, but no more. You'll be a dead 'un, Joe, from the time your knees shake before the preacher, and any fun you want you'd better have soon.'

"'Stuff and nonsense!' says Joe. 'I hope I'm not the sort of man that lets a woman pick out his friends, or tell him when he's to stay at home and how many drinks he's to have. A man that lets a woman run on him like that hadn't ought to be born a man at all; skirts an' a feedin' bottle would be more in his line than pants an' liquor. No, sir,' says he, tryin' his expansion an' holdin' up his head, 'you'll find Joe Kennedy will be boss of his own house every time, and if his wife believes any different she'll make a big mistake.'

"So then they both went up to the 'Fisherman's Rest' an' drank good luck to Joe as a married man, it bein' likely he'd need it, as Pete remarked.

"Joe got married a couple of months after, and Pete was best man, lookin' as if he didn't enjoy his job at all except when he looked at Joe—then he seemed thankful he wasn't in his place. They said the bride looked lovely. Pete told her she looked sunny, but he happenin' to look at her hair as he said it, she give him a look fit to freeze perdition's south corner, and remembered it against him afterwards; though, as he told me, he hadn't meant



nothin' but a compliment. He had meant to say 'radiant' instead of 'sunny,' havin' got the word out of a newspaper account of a city weddin' that he had read a-purpose so he could say the right thing, but at the last moment it had slipped his memory and he had to do the best he knewed how off-hand.

"When they came back from their weddin' trip they took up housekeeping in a snug little cottage, an' Joe was so busy fixin' things up that his friends didn't see much of him, nor expect to.

"Pete was asked up to supper once, but Mrs. Joe was so polite to him that he felt nervous all through the meal and was glad when it was over, for then he made sure him and Joe would sit out on the verandah and smoke a pipe together. He put his hand in his pocket to make sure his pipe was there and patted it like a friend. But Mrs. Joe came right along with them, lettin' the dishes take care of themselves.

"When they had sat down and pulled out their pipes and Pete was slicin' up his plug, he noticed that Joe had a tobaccer pouch and was fillin' his pipe from it with some fine-chopped, yeller-lookin' stuff.

"What you got there?" he says; 'a new tobaccer?'

"Yes, like to try it?" says Joe, handin' over the pouch.

"Pete took it an' sniffed at it. It was sort of sweet-smellin', like a girl's letter paper.

"It looks like hay, an' smells like a drug store," says he, handin' of it back an' goin' on cuttin' up his plug. 'I guess I'll stay with "Old Jack's Dream." It seems to have more zip to it, somehow.'

"Joe's tobaccer is very good," says Mrs. Joe. 'He used to smoke that black stuff you have, but it smelt up the curtains and was bad for his heart, so I persuaded him to get a milder kind and put some scent in it.'

"Ho!" says Pete. 'Well, maybe it's best for him. Only,' says he to Joe, that was pretendin' to be very busy lookin' at a vine climbin' up the porch, 'I never knew you had a weak heart.'

"It's give me trouble lately," says Joe. 'A sort of flutterin'. The doctor says I shouldn't smoke at all.'

"Oh, Joe," says his wife, 'you never told me you'd been to see the doctor! Why

don't you do as he says? Put that pipe out at once.'

"He said I wasn't to break off too sudden," says Joe, very red in the face. 'It ain't altogether tobaccer that causes it.'

"Would it be liquor?" says Pete. 'They say that's bad for the heart, if not taken reg'lar. Maybe you're not drinkin' as much as usual.'

"Mrs. Joe looked hard at her husband.

"It ain't liquor," says Joe, scowlin' at him. 'I never did take more than a glass now and then to be sociable, or when I felt a cold coming on. I wish some people I know could say the same.'

"He looked severe at Pete, an' so did his wife, and for the moment he couldn't think of a thing to say.

"Maybe they could—if they had to," says Pete at last, quite took aback by the way Joe lied, but thinkin' he had good cause for it.

"When he started home Joe walked down to the front gate with him. Pete asked him to come along to the 'Fisherman's Rest' an' have just one glass for the sake of old times, but Joe said his wife would be nervous if left alone. He said he would come some other night.

"Well," says Pete, 'with your weak heart maybe it's best to stay near a bed. I'm sorry to hear that you're in poor health, Joe. Married life must be tryin' to the constitution.'

"My health's all right," says Joe, pullin' out some black shag tobaccer and rammin' his pipe full. He lit up an' blowed the smoke through his nose. 'That's a smoke,' says he. 'What did you want to make that break about my drinkin' for?'

"It slipped out," says Pete, 'and, anyway, I s'posed you was boss in your own house. Ain't you?'

"Of course I am," says Joe. 'Still, it's better not to let women know too much. Most of 'em do, anyway,' he says.

"So Pete went home, droppin' into the 'Fisherman's rest' for a quiet drink on his way and thinkin' how much Joe would have enjoyed it.

"It was some time before Pete saw Joe again for more than to pass the time o' day. Joe stuck close to the house, and when he came out at night it was with his

wife to go to some meetin' of a mish'nary society or a temperance lecture. All the boys said it couldn't last, but for a long time it looked as if they was mistaken. Them as Joe had joshed for bein' under their wives' thumbs had it in for him, and all as wasn't married remembered how big he used to talk and were wishful to get him to explain himself.

"One night we was all sittin' around as usual, it bein' early and no excitement, when the door opened and Joe walked in. He came over and sat down and ordered up a drink same as he used to do.

"Well, Joe," says old man Horner, "we ain't seen much of you lately. What you been doin' with yourself?"

"Fixin' up my house," says Joe. "Women are partic'lar about little things, and a man has to humor 'em."

"It must take a lot of fixin'," says old man Horner. "Here you've been married a matter of four months an' just got done. I s'pose you'll drop around often from now on?"

"I may," says Joe, careless-like, "but I find I like to sit down an' smoke my pipe after a day's work."

"Don't it smell up the curtains?" says some one, an' Joe looked hard at Pete Hoover, though he had said nothing.

"Joe had his drink, and when he had had a couple more he began to give the boys pointers on how to manage women.

"You want to be firm with them," he says, "and let them know that what you say goes, right from the start. At the same time, you must remember that they're weak, dependent critters, and do what you can to please 'em."

"Such as goin' to mish'nary societies an' temperance meetin's," says Pete Hoover. "I s'pose you'll be goin' home soon, 'count o' your wife waitin' for you."

"I'll go home when I like," says Joe. "Tonight I feel like stayin' here till the house closes up, just for the sake of old times. My wife won't worry about me; she knows I can take care of myself. I says to her before I come out, "Katy," I says, "I'm goin' down to see how the boys are gettin' on. Don't wait up for me, because it's likely I'll be late." "All right, Joe," she says, and so I come along. That's the way to manage a woman; tell

her what you intend to do and go and do it, and she'll think all the more of you. I've no patience with some men who let their wives keep 'em at home, away from all sorts of fun.' And he looked over at Ezra Coffin and a couple more in a pityin' way.

"It might have been his stummick was out of order, or because he hadn't been taking his liquor reg'lar of late, but after about five drinks Joe began to get noisy and Pete Hoover tried to get him to go home. He wouldn't hear of it, and Pete tried all sorts of coaxing.

"Come on, Joe," he says. "This room is stuffy and a breath of fresh air 'll do us both good. We'll take a walk around town and see what's goin' on."

"What's matter with this?" says Joe, lookin' at him very solemn. "Good liquor, good boys; no place like it. Le's stay an' whoop 'er up."

"Don't be a donkey," says Pete, gettin' tired of tryin' to persuade him. "You don't want to be carried home drunk, do you? What'll your wife say?"

"My wife's bes' li'l woman in world," says Joe. "Won't say word. Knows I'm lordanmaster. Great conf'dence in m' judgment. Le's drink her health, all hand!"

"She'll give you blue blazes, that's what she'll do," says Pete. "Come on, now; it's worth my reputation to take you home, but I'll do it." He caught Joe by the scruff of the neck with one hand and the slack of the trousers by the other and lifted him onto his feet. "Will you come now, or take the bummer's run?" says he.

"I'll come," says Joe, very dignified, "but I want to say a few words to the boys. Gen'elmen, such of you as are married gen'elmen, an' all those that ain't—an' ol' man Horner! It goes to my heart to see you sittin' here tankin' up when you might be respec'ble members of indus'trious community. You're drunk, all drunk, all good an' drunk. All 'fraid to go home an' hear wife's voice—heavenly music, woman's voice. Lemme tell you secret. Be firm. Our strength's woman's weakness. Look at me. Do what I like, go where I like, go home when I like—no kick comin'. Why? Because I'm firm an' lordanmaster. Loved, honored, an'

obeyed—from drop of the hat. My wife obeys me—

“He broke off, starin’ at the door that had opened, and there, lookin’ as if she had just stepped out of a bandbox, was Katy Kennedy with a spark in her eye to match the color of her hair; and I never knew how red an’ dangersome it looked before. She came across the room as if she meant business, and, never lookin’ at her husband, began to talk to Peter Hoover.

“‘Now,’ says she, ‘tell me what this means!’

“‘It was a poser for Pete, and he could only mumble out that him an’ Joe was just goin’ home.

“‘You were?’ says she. ‘To keep up your drunken orgy and turn my house into a bar-room, I s’pose. It’s lucky I came back. You wait till I am called out to spend the night with my cousin’s wife that is sick, and then you entice my husband away from home, where he’d promised faithful to stay, and drag him into your low haunts and vices. Call yourself a man!’ she says. ‘A sneakin’, lyin’, cowardly, drink-sodden beast, pretendin’ to be a friend!’

“That was how she led off, an’ for five minutes, for I watched the clock, her tongue flew, an’ there wasn’t a name a decent woman could call a man that she didn’t use to Pete Hoover an’ the rest of us. At the end of that time she shut up, sharp.

“‘There,’ says she, drawin’ a long breath, ‘that’s a part of what I think of you, and the rest I’d have to get a man to say, because I’m a lady. Now,’ says she to Joe, ‘you come home with me and go to bed!’ And she marched him out of the room, he havin’ sobered wonderful, on a sudden.

“We looked at each other and didn’t say a word till the door closed, and then Pete Hoover swore up into the air, not loud, but heartfelt and steady.

“‘That’s what I get for tryin’ to chum with a married man,’ he says. ‘The good Samaritan, he played in luck; the man that fell among thieves might have been married, an’ I guess the priest an’ the Levite were wise. I’m goin’ home; my ears feel all tingly yet.’

“After he had gone, the rest of us didn’t have much to say, except one man as wasn’t married, who told what he would do if his wife ever came to look for him when he was enjoyin’ of a quiet evenin’, an’ Bill Dugan, that had been in the Sydney trade an’ said what a pity it was Mrs. Joe hadn’t been born a man—with her gift of language there wouldn’t have been a better skipper afloat, an’ Bill knew what he was talkin’ about.

“After that Joe got to be the quietest married man you ever see, toned down an’ steady in double harness, fit for a lady to drive. If he has any theories about how woman should be managed he keeps them to hisself, an’ if he’s ever broke out since that one night I never heard tell of it. He won’t have nothing to do with Pete Hoover, though friendly enough when he meets him. Maybe he isn’t let. For that matter Pete is married, too, but their wives don’t visit, and it worries Mrs. Joe that their children go to the same school.

“This is just a sample, as I started out to tell you, of how marriage spoils a man an’ destroys friendships. There’s heaps of men like Joe Kennedy an’ Pete Hoover, but I don’t know as there’s many women can talk alongside of Mrs. Joe Kennedy, and maybe it’s all for the best, as we are taught to say, when anything extra unpleasant happens.

“No, I don’t want no more, but as you are orderin’ I’ll keep you company, just for sociability’s sake,” said the old fisherman, shoving his glass gently towards the attendant, with the air of one who endures much rather than offend against the unwritten laws of hospitality.

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PARISIAN MODES, by special arrangement REUTLINGER, PARIS

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FROM MAISON-REDFERN. Calling costume of brown voile; princesse; draped at the waist and over the hips. The corsage is relieved by bows of taffeta.

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MAISON BECHOFF-DAVID. Robe of embroidered white muslin trimmed with flounces of Valenciennes lace. The girdle is of two-toned blue.

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PARISIAN MODES, by special arrangement REUTLINGER, PARIS

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MAISON BECHOFF-DAVID. Afternoon costume trimmed with flounces of English embroidery. The bodice is trimmed with Pompadour taffeta, draped; girdle in old rose taffeta.

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MAISON REDFERN. Calling costume of pastel blue, trimmed with braided scollops. The skirt is princess and the jacket bolero with undersleeves of valenciennes.

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PARISIAN MODES, by special arrangement REUTLINGER, PARIS

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MAISON REDFERN. Afternoon costume of striped silk voile trimmed with sprays of passementerie. The skirt is shirred to form the girdle.

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PARISIAN MODES, by special arrangement REUTLINGER, PARIS

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MAISON LAFERRIER. Mantelet of blue pastel surah, the draped ends of the material giving a sash effect.

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PHOTOGRAPH BY BYRON, NEW YORK

Scene from "The Social Whirl."

## Some Dramas of the Day

BY ACTON DAVIES

Nothing shows the change of seasons quicker than the character of the plays at the Metropolitan theaters. "The Social Whirl," recently produced at the Casino, carried the season from spring into summer with one fell swoop. The summer "Show" in New York is from one point of view quite as lucrative and important a production as any of its winter contemporaries. It appeals to a different public, to be sure, and its captious critics view it perhaps at a different angle, but at the same time, in the words of the bargain counter, "it has to make good." This, the new musical *mélange* at the Casino certainly did. As a matter of fact, not since Manager George Lederer or Rudolph Aaronson was in his halcyon, or halibut, days, has the Casino known so entirely successful a "show."

I use the term "show" advisedly, for really it is the only word which properly characterizes such a collection of legs, lingerie, and latitude as this performance offers. It is rarely that you will find a musical play which gives so many members of its cast a chance to score as "The Social Whirl" does. Its production marked the renaissance of the Casino. It brought this playhouse, which of late has suffered from fire, innocuous desuetude, and others of those particular ills to which the theatrical flesh is peculiarly heir, into its own again, and re-established it upon the basis in New York theatricals which it used to occupy ten or eleven years ago, in the days when "In Gay New York," the "Merry

World," and other summer plays, if at all successful, could rely upon a six months' run at the very least.

Perhaps the most cheering accomplishment which this success achieved was its bringing back to their old bailiwick again of several comparatively old-time musical comedy favorites; for instance, there was the composer and conductor of "The Social Whirl," Gustave Kerker. For years he ranked as one of the Casino's demi-gods; his score of "The Belle of New York" made him an international reputation only second to that of Edna May, and yet until he composed the music of "The Social World," his muse has been more or less in abeyance, one might almost say, in total eclipse. In this piece Kerker reasserts himself. His score has all the vim and rush and assurance of his old-time successes. His work has undoubtedly been one of the strong factors in the new piece's success.

Then there is the librettist, Joseph Herbert. Ten years ago, when he wrote "The Geezer" for the Weber & Fields company the eyes of all the American managerial world were upon him. He was regarded as the coming librettist. The years have passed and Mr. Herbert, always versatile, has been obliged, in the interim, to rely upon his powers as a comedian more and more, for the very simple reason that his librettos have almost invariably flashed in the pan. But in the "Social Whirl" he, like Mr. Kerker, gets his second wind. Not only are his lyrics extremely





PHOTOGRAPH BY OTTO BARONY, NEW YORK

Mrs. Fiske as Dolce.

clever, but he has really given the piece the rarest of attributes in a musical comedy—a plot.

Coming down to the actors, or perhaps to be more accurate I should say the actresses, three women who have known success in the sweet back and beyond have once more succeeded in clutching a few metropolitan laurels. Take the case of Miss Ada Lewis, who as the original tough girl at Harrigan's fourteen years ago, made herself the talk of the town. The seasons passed, the Harrigan Company went into limbo, and Miss Lewis, although she had an opportunity to play many parts never struck the bull's eye squarely in the center again. Once, with Miss May Irwin in "The Widow Jones" as the *Tailor-Made Girl*, she almost scored again, but she was in the shadow of an inimitable comedienne, and her laurels at the best then were very much on the fringe of a real success. Then Miss Lewis in despair tried straight drama, and for three years she was comparatively lost to sight under a Japanese make-up, as the custodian and general chaperone to the *Princess Yo San* in "The Darling of the Gods."

It was only when she joined the Shuberts and took her place in the Casino's present whirligig that Miss Lewis struck her old trail successfully once more. In "The Social Whirl" she plays the rôle of a bounding and breezy western actress, who has played the Idaho circuit of water tanks with huge rural success for many seasons. She comes to New York to take a fall out of Broadway, and her experiences there form some of the most diverting incidents of the play.

Then there is Miss Maude Raymond. She figured in a number of successes years ago, but although she is the wife of one of the Roger Brothers, for many seasons she has been conspicuous by her absence from their productions. In the Casino success she is the colored girl—so light in hue,



PHOTOGRAPH BY HALL, NEW YORK

Margaret Brown in "Peter Pan."

that as she explains to the audience she has "only been dipped once," who officiates as the *majoress domo* in the manicure shop where the first act's scene is laid. Her part is a tiny one but her one song, an interpolated lyric by Mr. George Spink, entitled "Billy Simmons," is the hit *par excellence* of the performance. This song tells the trials and tribulations of a colored man who cannot keep his feet still when the band plays. There are six verses to it and each one of them is funnier than the other.

Miss Adele Ritchie, the prima donna of the occasion, wears some very beautiful frocks, acts with a great deal more than the usual vim, and though her voice has reached a stage where it strays from the key as easily as if it had just obtained a divorce from a Yale lock, still you forgive her this slight vocal discrepancy on account of the amount of extreme exuberance and vivacity which she contributes to the whole performance. In the last act she proves



PHOTOGRAPH BY SARONY, NEW YORK

Francis Wilson.



PHOTOGRAPH BY HALL, NEW YORK

Kitty Morton in "Breaking into Society."

herself a fine equestrienne as well as a capital actress. As the heroine of the play she is obliged at the last moment to mount a horse in the ladies' handicap. She wins, of course, as has always been the way with stage heroines from the days of "In Old Kentucky" down; but it isn't so much the way she wins as it is the clever way in which she does it. Just as the entire chorus is singing a big descriptive aria describing the race, and as they reach their highest notes, Miss Ritchie on her thoroughbred jumps the fence and lands a winner in the center of the stage. It is a splendid effect, but may heaven help Miss Ritchie and the entire audience, to say nothing of the orchestra players, if the horse ever trips or stubs his toe. Frederick Bond, Joseph Coyne, Charles Ross, and Mabel Fenton are among the other actors who are big factors in "The Social Whirl's" big success.

That it is always the comedian who aspires to play Hamlet is a well-known fact, but the latest star to demonstrate it is Mr. Francis Wilson. In "The Mountain Climber," of which I wrote last month



PHOTOGRAPH BY BYRON NEW YORK

Charles J. Ross and Mabel Fenton in "The Social Whirl."

Mr. Wilson has scored one of the biggest farcical successes which he has ever had. But what is success to an actor with aspirations? Hence, the addition to the bill a few nights ago of "The Little Father of the Wilderness," a tiny tragedy which shows Mr. Wilson in the heroic and somewhat tragic rôle of a Canadian Jesuit Priest. The play is really a little gem and its authors, the Messrs. Austin Strong and Lloyd Osbourne, have due cause to congratulate themselves. Of course, for the ordinary theater goer, who has grown up with Mr. Wilson since the days of *Caddy* in "Erminie," it is difficult to accept him seriously; but on the other hand, it is only as fair to the actor's aspirations as it is to his art to state, that he brings far more power and seriousness to this rôle than any one would have expected that he could.

The story is simple but most touching. *Père Marlotte* is a Jesuit priest who has been one of the pioneers in the settlement of Canada. His name and fame have penetrated in a casual way even to the court

of Louis XV. Some months before the play opens, *King Louis*, after dining both unwisely and too well gets into a dispute with one of his ministers as to the height of Niagara Falls. A wager is laid with regard to it, and the minister declares that the only way the bet can be settled is to have the famous little Jesuit summoned to France to settle the question. The order is sent, and in due course the little priest and *Frère Gregorie* arrive at the court. Their simple garb and their provincial manners afford the courtiers new laughing stock. The little priest, conscious of the assistance which he has been to his native country, imagines that *King Louis*, in his righteousness has summoned him to decorate him with some honors of the court, but the ribald king by this time has forgotten both the discussion and the

bet. When it is recalled to his mind, he sees the *Little Father* and promptly loses his bet. The priest, downcast and broken-hearted, is making his way from the palace when *Chevalier de Frontenac*, the governor of New France, suddenly recognizes him and rushes toward him with outstretched hands. He tells the king what a hero the little priest has been in his own country, and the king, kneeling in all humbleness, asks for the little father's blessing, and after receiving it makes him an archbishop.

Mr. Wilson's work in this rôle, which is entirely foreign to him, is distinctly creditable. I will not go so far as to say that he realizes all the possibilities of this part, for it is an exceptionally fine and touching characterization, but in keeping the rôle from ridicule he is accomplishing, for a *farceur*, such as he is, a great deal. The artistic success of the piece is scored by Mr. Lewers, who gives an extremely fine performance of *King Louis*. There is ruggedness and strength, too, in Joseph

Brennan's performance of *Frontenac*; and Miss Edith Barker is the one little patch of femininity which lightens this rather somber but most delightful little play.

Just as Mr. Wilson is making his first essay in a serious rôle, Mr. William H. Crane is returning to his muttons, as it were. His "muttons" in this instance is "An American Lord," a farcial, international play, by Broadhurst and Dazey.

All last season Mr. Crane was serious at a very severe cost. He played a piece from the French, called "Business is Business," in which he portrayed a villainous multi-millionaire, from whose nature the very last drops of the milk of human kindness had been squeezed. "Business is Business" proved very bad business indeed for the box office, and more or less like the little dog who came home with his tail between his legs, Mr. Crane has now come home and promised to be good, or at least jovial "for ever and ever, amen." As a comedian Mr. Crane is really a national institution. His range may be limited, but as long as he can puff out his cheeks, say "huh huh!" and stick his thumbs in the arm pits of his waist coat at stated intervals, he can play to crowded houses all the way from Montauk Point to somewhere on this side of the east of Suez. His one little excursion in tragedy has probably taught him an expensive lesson, but he comes back to his own again unscathed and quite as good natured and jolly as ever before.

I am sorry that I cannot throw any paeans of praise at "An American Lord" as a play, but it answers its purpose and gives Mr. Crane a suitable, whole-soul, congenial rôle. The play has a really good motive and properly worked out it might have provided him with a vehicle which would have lasted him for years.

The story concerns a sturdy westerner brought up in a mining country, who has

a rabid hatred of the English aristocracy. All of a sudden he finds himself the heir to an English title and a big estate. At first he refuses to accept it, but when it is explained to him by his son, that by going abroad and accepting his new position he may be able to regenerate all England, he shoulders his burden and books his passage for London. The second and third acts show him raising Cain in an English county, but eventually he is brought to realize that there are two sides to every question, and that while he, as a good American, may be perfectly right, an Englishman is equally justified in running his country according to his own lights. In the meantime the sturdy westerner succumbs to the charms of an Irish widow, and the curtain is allowed to descend upon a scene of hands-across-the-seas lines. Miss Hilda Spong plays the Irish widow very charmingly. Her brogue, however, slips its moorings on many occasions, but that is a detail after all. The cleverest performance in the piece is Mr. Harry Blackmore's sketch of an old darky servant.

The only chance which New Yorkers have had of seeing Mrs. Fiske in a new



William H. Crane and Harry Blackmore in "An American Lord."



rôle this year came the other afternoon when at the Manhattan, in conjunction with two little plays from her own pen, she appeared in John Luther Long's one-act comedy, "Dolce."

When the play opens an American artist living in Florence is scrambling a couple of eggs for his own breakfast. He is poor, like a great many other American artists abroad, but he has his memories. In one corner of his studio hangs a portrait of a very beautiful young Italian girl of twelve. It is called "Dolce," and the artist had

painted it in his callow days at a Philadelphia art school. The model was a child whom he had found in Philadelphia's "Little Italy." After the picture was finished, the child had vanished, but once a year a letter had come to him written from Italy. That was his sole knowledge of her. It told him no details of her circumstances, but merely expressed her undying love for him. A knock comes at the door and an elaborately gowned woman enters. Her aunt, she explains, is a great collector of pictures

and has commissioned her to buy one of the artist's portraits. She looks about the studio and finally selects "Dolce." The artist refuses to sell. She asks him "Why?" He refuses to answer. Then she offers to scramble his eggs for him, and donning his painter's rough blue smock over her garish frock, they fall into conversation. Needless to say, of course, she is *Dolce*—Dolce glorified, the daughter of a princess who has finally come into her own. Before disclosing her identity, she angles with the man, her one object being to discover

whether he is married or not. Finally, from a chance remark, she decides that he must be. She throws her smock aside, picks up her gloves, and prepares to go. He begs her to stay a little longer—until the eggs are cooked at all events, and then, when she asks him where his wife is, he declares positively that he has never married. That settles it. She sits down again. They have coffee and omelet, too. She tells him that she is Dolce, that he is the only man she has ever loved and ever could love, and the curtain falls

on an immediate prospect of another international marriage.

The little play was acted delightfully by both Mrs. Fiske and Mr. John Mason. Curiously enough Mrs. Fiske's enunciation, which for years has been notoriously indistinct when she plays an English rôle, was clear as a bell in this part, in which she used a broken English dialect. In the comedy scenes she played with a rare drollery and the tender touches were gauged with a very rare discretion. "Dolce" is worthy of the coming feature of her



PHOTOGRAPH BY SARONY, NEW YORK

Harriett Sterling in "The Girl from the Golden West."

regular repertoire.

Never has there been a season when the American Indian figured as prominently in Broadway productions as he has this year. Scarcely a tribe but has been represented, either in tragedy, comedy, burlesque, or living pictures. Perhaps the most notable Indian portraitures of this season have been Mr. Harry Benremo's *Billy Jackrabbit* and his unmarried spouse *Wackles*; the two Digger Indians in "The Girl of the Golden West;" Miss





PHOTOGRAPH BY SARONY, NEW YORK

Harry Benrimo in "The Girl from the Golden West."

Margaret Gordon's *Tiger Lily*; a Scotchman's idea of what an Indian girl ought to be in J. M. Barrie's "Peter Pan;" and Mr. H. Reeves Smith's creation of the Indian title rôle in the new all-Indian drama which failed signally at the Liberty some weeks ago. In New York this rôle was played by Mr. Tyrone Power, but it was Mr. H. Reeves Smith who created the part in the original production at Milwaukee.

A musical novelty of this gladsome spring season, which is serving to attract the unmusical multitudes to the New Amsterdam, perhaps New York's most gorgeous theatre, is "The Free Lance," John Philips Sousa's latest attempt to dramatize—if the term be acceptable—the rhythm of a Sousa March. In a degree he has succeeded, but only in a degree. Indeed the tired reviewer is made constantly to feel as if the band master were about to do the great thing, which he never does. There is a certain sense of restraint apparent to him who listens to the trombone swell of "The Free Lance,"

quite as if Mr. Sousa had worked under the unenthusiastic eye—and ear—of another who constantly bade him "hold in," "hoid in;" so the auditor waits, and patiently waits, for the "big thing" and when all is over and he realizes that he has waited and hoped in vain there results a definite feeling of disappointment.

Yet there are a few of the seventeen numbers which serve to stir the blood of the man and woman to whom Mr. Sousa and Mr. Sousa's work represent the height of musical art and its expression. "The Goose Girl," song in the first act is a happy bit, and "The Song of the Free Lance," which is heard just before the final curtain, seems to possess elements of popularity as it is already being whistled on the East Side streets.

It is, however, with the march finale to the first act that Mr. Sousa sets the bodies of his auditors a-swaying. "On to Vic-



PHOTOGRAPH BY WALINGER, CHICAGO

William H. Crane.

tory" is the title of the composition and, coming as it does just before the first curtain, it might serve to indicate the popular success of the entire work.

Of the book little need be written. Its rather striking similarity to the libretto "Happyland" by Mr. Fred Rankin, produced earlier in the season, would seem to indicate that both he and Mr. Harry B. Smith, the librettist of "The Free Lance," drew generously from Mark Twain's familiar barrel. Nor have either improved the original. The story, it will be recalled, relates the woeful tribulations of a twain of royal bankrupts who seek, by the marriage of their children, to recoup each other's fortunes, neither being aware of the other's parlous straits. The royal offsprings flee from matrimony, and their places are temporarily occupied by a goose girl and an ex-bandit, but in time—of course in time—for the final curtain, the "real" prince and princess come back having in the interim met and loved.

Like the silver lining to the blackest of clouds, the superb and unselfish way in which the actors and actresses of America have thrown themselves into the noble work of providing money and supplies for the sufferers by the appalling San Fran-

cisco disaster, shines forth. Always the first to come to the rescue of others in distress, it would be well for the public at large, at those times when they are apt to sneer at the player for his natural faults and foibles, to remember that there is no profession in the world, nor for that matter, any trade, which has so thoroughly absorbed the Biblical sentiment—and not only absorbed but lived up to it—that the greatest of these is Charity.



PHOTOGRAPH BY HALL, NEW YORK

Frederic K. Bond and Adele Ritchie in "The Social Whirl."



PHOTOGRAPH BY HALL, NEW YORK

The Manicure Girls in "The Social Whirl."